

SETTLING JACK AND TOMMY ON THE LAND.
SPRING PLANTING. By Professor Biffen.

COUNTRY LIFE

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 27th, 1917.

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RITA MARTIN

THE COUNTESS OF ANCASTER.

74, Baker Street, W.

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE & COUNTRY PURSUITS

OFFICES: 20, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

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THE ART OF GROWING POTATOES

IT was very fortunate for the Farmers' Club that at this juncture they were enabled to induce so expert a grower of potatoes as Major D. A. Spence to give them a lecture on the subject on Monday last. Major Spence is full of the potato spirit, if we may use the term without offence. He loves the plant, and he explains the processes of its growth with idyllic skill: witness his account of the growing of potatoes on the west coast of Scotland. It is a wet country, the rainfall being much greater than on the east coast, and yet, says Major Spence, "they manage year after year to raise these crops up to 16 tons without a single blight in them." A popular idea on which we should have liked to have had his opinion is that the suitability of the climate is due in large measure to the warmth of the breezes which are affected by the waters of the Gulf Stream. He must almost have persuaded his audience that there is no

lot in life happier than that of an Ayrshire farmer. They get their splendid return of 16 tons to the acre, and afterwards sow Italian rye grass or rape and plough it in green. Some of the fields are planted with a second crop of potatoes, the return from which is usually kept for the seed, and they use very large seed in Ayrshire. The families in that district inherit the instinct for growing potatoes just as the farmers in Bordeaux take naturally to making claret. "The families," says Major Spence, "have been at the same job for generations, and they know the different capacities and peculiarities of every acre of ground on these early potato fields."

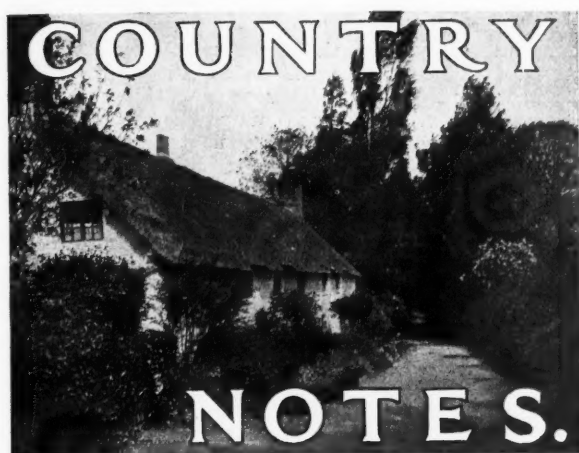
Best of all, perhaps, is his description of the easy times that the farmers have. For three or four weeks in the year they work like niggers day and night, but the weather is generally fine and the days long, and the crops are carted direct from the fields in barrels or sacks to the stations. The farmer gets his big cheques every week or so for this month, and his risk is over. For eleven months, mark you, "he has very little else to do but enjoy the spending of these same cheques." As we have said before, who would not be a potato farmer in Ayrshire? Among the classes of land on which excellent crops can be produced some of his audience must have been surprised that reclaimed land was mentioned. "I have seen," says this expert, "some very heavy crops grown on land reclaimed from moor and heath, and, in fact, this season about the heaviest crops I have seen are on the moorish, thin land in some parts of Aberdeenshire." We commend this quotation to the notice of those who are inclined to be sceptical in regard to the returns obtained from the Norfolk reclamation. It is evident that Major Spence would not be astonished at the remarkable figures we have been able to produce, nor would he be surprised to learn that there are still more remarkable figures to follow. One would like to hear him express himself as to the fact that while this country threatens to be short of food, thousands upon thousands of acres capable of bearing splendid crops of potatoes or wheat or peas or any other source of human food are allowed to lie idle, to remain part of the slumbering heatherland of which the Dutch reclamation poet sings.

Taking other stray points in a lecture which was full of them, it is certainly worthy of attention that in the lecturer's opinion "the potato is an article of diet which might be used to a far greater extent in the average household." He says it could be cooked in such a way as to be put on the table at almost every meal, and nobody would die of starvation if he had a chance of eating potatoes and herring every day. Another very interesting point is that this expert considers that old grassland is the very best for potatoes. "The potatoes simply revel in the turf for several years." English farmers would object that old turf as a rule is full of wireworms and other vermin. In Scotland, perhaps, they are not so plentiful. But in the south of England during the last few years they have been especially destructive of potatoes, and that has afforded one reason why the farmers have not been too keen about ploughing up their grassland for the purpose of growing tubers. They say—and we believe that for the Southern district they are right—that the best way is to grow first a good crop of oats, and the land afterwards will be much more suitable for potatoes. Actual farmers will be extremely interested in the speaker's description of the methods adopted in his own country, but for this we must refer them to the lecture itself. To the general reader these details of management have not the same interest that they have for the practical farmer. But the Farmers' Club may be very heartily congratulated on their new departure. It is, we believe, the first occasion on which it has had an opportunity of listening to an address by a great Scottish potato-grower on the subject with which he is most familiar. Were it only for the intimate knowledge of this most useful of food plants with which Major Spence's lecture was started, it would have been worth while; but he went further and most generously placed his experience at the service of the Club.

Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece is a portrait of the Countess of Ancaster, eldest daughter of the late Mr. W. L. Breeze of New York, whose marriage to the second Earl of Ancaster took place in 1905.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



IN the article on the Yorkshire estate acquired for the purpose of settling soldiers and sailors it will be found there are two suggestions which merit attention. The more important is that, even if the expense is a little more, the small holder's house should be self-contained. That conduces so much to the convenience of rearing the small livestock of the holding that the extra expenditure is not uneconomical even in these difficult times. It is perfectly true that the entire cost of the holdings will be very much greater in war-time than it would have been, say, in 1913; but it would be penny wise, pound foolish to grudge the extra sixty pounds or so which would be necessitated by this arrangement. The small holder should be regarded as a permanent institution. His house will probably be inhabited by succeeding generations for a century or two. Moreover, if these are expensive times for building, they are profitable times for the farmer, and it is in every way likely that prices will continue high for many years after the war is over. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise. The aim, then, should be so to increase the income of the small holder that a commercial rent or, as we hope, the eventual purchase of the house and holding, will come well within his compass.

IN this again it is necessary to point out that the Commission to whose labours the settlement scheme is due dealt very perfunctorily with the increased productivity which has become the first necessity of agriculture. Had they gone thoroughly into its possibilities they would have been able to establish this scheme on a strong foundation. As a matter of fact, the subject was discussed in very much the same way as it has been discussed by a hundred previous Departmental Committees. Here and there one comes across a reference to the war, but no one on the committee apparently realised that, come what may, England must get more out of her farm land. It is the only way to relieve the anxiety that otherwise would weigh upon everybody. But more produce from the soil means more business for the small holder. No one will expect him to put forth a special effort, not only in the way of work, but in the way of adopting scientific methods in dealing with land, so as to get the maximum return from it, without his being sure of a greater reward for what he does. In his increased prosperity will be found a solution to the many quasi-political controversies that ran like little winds of doctrine over the deliberations of the Committee.

THE other proposal to a considerable extent has been carried out on the Continent. In Great Britain there is a pathetic belief in the power of lecturers and instructors, and so the apparatus of the settlement includes *in posse* the setting up of a demonstration farm. Well, a demonstration farm may be useful, a lecture may be useful, instruction may be useful; but none of them is so useful as the education which a keen cultivator can acquire for himself. An extremely practical way of getting him to do this is by proposing and, if need be, enforcing the use of little trial plots beside the main crops which he is cultivating. At first there will need to be supervision, but even then he will apply his manures or perform new operations with his own hand. He will be able to compare the result of more scientific methods with his own method as seen in the crops of his field. Further, the moral of the lesson will be driven home by a simple question of arithmetic. If he objects, as many of the ignorant do, to a more liberal use of artificial manures he can be made to demonstrate by his own experiment how

they work out financially. He has but to add so much for the increased value of the manure and compare the extra outlay with the extra return to see how far he has got back what he laid out. He can then discuss these matters to some purpose with his fellow workers, and the advance once started in this way may be trusted to go on with accelerating speed.

IN the new number of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture, Mr. J. H. Burton, the Agricultural Organiser for Somerset, whose energy and intelligence we have had occasion previously to notice, gives an interesting account of a Somerset potato scheme. It was brought into existence last year, but will be still more useful this year. The proposal was that potatoes of two Scottish varieties, Arran Chief and Dalhousie, should be delivered at the nearest railway station at the prices, respectively, of 17s. 6d. and 16s. 6d. per hundredweight. The merchants, however, would not give a firm quotation, that might be kept up until orders had been secured, whereupon the County Council bought fifty tons of potatoes on the nail, and Mr. Burton says that "judging by present indications there seems little doubt as to the whole being sold." He suggests to those who feel inclined to copy the plan elsewhere, that not too many varieties should be dealt with, as the larger the number of sorts supplied the more difficult it becomes to work the scheme. Two are quite sufficient, and he names Arran Chief and a potato of the Up-to-date type—Up-to-date, Dalhousie or Factor. It is important to exact from the vendor a definite guarantee as to the sources of origin of the potatoes. This is especially necessary just now, because of the common report that considerable quantities of Lincolnshire potatoes have been sent into Scotland this year.

"OF WOUNDS."

(A. H. F. : East Africa.)

So many years ago you went
Far overseas,

I had not thought

That even the wind of death could stir a scent
In such old memories.

For strange, in those years, much you did,
Much left undone;

Strange, strange that now,

Cleaving the seas, the years, my heart is rid
Of every ache but one.

Ache for a lad with charm for dower,

Prince-proud, prince-wild;

Who, loved and sought,

Yet, princely, lavished many a golden hour
Companioning a child.

The child that was has waked . . . and twined
In colours brave

A gay spring wreath

Of all-sweet memories: dear, this shall find,
Homing, your desert grave.

V. H. FRIEDLAENDER.

AGRICULTURE is absorbing a great deal of attention in this country, but it must be absorbing still more in the lands of our adversaries. It may be only coincidence or it may be cause and effect, but since Sir David Beatty succeeded to the High Command of the Navy the Blockade of the Central Powers has been greatly intensified. Little or no food is now passing from the rest of the world to Austria and Germany. There cannot be much at home either. It has now been demonstrated that the potato crop in Central Europe was as great a failure as anywhere else, and the present shortage of supply is its result. The harvest, too, was less than moderate, and, without allowing the wish to become father of the thought, it certainly seems to be the case that there is a very considerable shortage of food in Austria and no plentifulness of it in Germany. The question in doubt really is whether this scarcity is or is not so great as to make the necessity felt that something decisive must be done. We are inclined to believe that the situation will explode in what we hope will be a last desperate effort by the Allied Powers. Then will follow the spring offensive of the Entente Powers, and what comes after depends on events about which it is impossible to prophesy.

A GREAT Highland Chief has passed away in the Duke of Atholl, who died on January 20th at Blair Castle, Blair Atholl. It would take more space than we can spare to

enumerate the many titles he bore, and some of these had a curious archaeological interest on account of the usages that had been handed down with them. When the heir was married the bride was carried over the doorstep by a number of old retainers, a usage which carries us far back into pagan times. The Duke delighted in such observances, for indeed he was no mean antiquary, and no one knew the history of Perthshire better. In his veins flowed the blood of the Stewarts, and there was no one more in sympathy with the romance of that unhappy yet love-compelling family. His privately circulated "*Chronicle of the Atholl and Tullibardine Families*" is a treasure-house of out-of-the-way knowledge. Prince Albert and Queen Victoria were unceasingly interested in the Duke of Atholl. It was the Prince who presented guns to the Atholl Highlanders, a personal bodyguard which has survived from feudal times. Queen Victoria presented colours to his Highlanders, the only private regiment in Britain; and when she visited Blair Atholl the late Duke's father on his knees presented her with a white rose as feudal tenure of the Earldom of Atholl. It is unnecessary to speak of the Duke's patriotism, his splendid example as the personal friend of all who were on his estate, and his perfect conduct as landowner. He was an old Scottish lord and perhaps the last of his type. His very presence seemed to carry one back to the days that are no more.

ALTHOUGH no official announcement has been made, it is persistently stated that M. Sazonoff is to succeed Count de Benckendorff at the Russian Embassy in London. M. Sazonoff would be sure of a cordial welcome. He has always shown himself an outspoken and true friend to this country and general regret was felt when he left the Foreign Office at Petrograd. There is no doubt that he would be a *persona grata* in London. He shares to a very large extent in the social charm which made Count de Benckendorff and the Countess de Benckendorff so welcome in Metropolitan circles. He is also a serious politician who has formed very definite and clear ideas as to what would be the outcome of this war. One is that the Turks should be driven out of Europe and the Russians allowed to occupy Constantinople. At the very beginning of the war he expressed views of this kind and they are strengthened rather than weakened by the lapse of time.

THE *Daily Chronicle* begins its leading article on President Wilson's speech by describing it as "an utterance of great elevation." The leader writer might have finished at that, because it certainly is no more. People in this country will see no very attractive picture in the President of the United States delivering himself of this polished piece of abstraction while European nations are still in the grips of bloody and relentless war. He ostentatiously refrains from making any suggestion leading to immediate peace, and confines himself to a disquisition on what may be accomplished when the war is over. Put into plain words, he suggests a revival of the so-called "Holy Alliance" of a hundred years ago, which became a subject of bitter ridicule eight years after its institution. In the trenchant cartoon "*The Holy Alliance Unmasked*," originally published in 1823 and reproduced in last week's *Spectator*, the idea of avoiding war which had prevailed in 1815 had died out in 1823. As our contemporary puts it: "The thought of the four monarchs represented is merely how to combine to crush the slightest movement among the sub-nationalities over whom they are the masters. Beneath the table and under their feet are the little kingdoms. Note that the British bulldogs, Justice and Honesty, are tightly muzzled, and that the flag of the Inquisition is in the foreground."

OBVIOUSLY, if the "Peace without Victory" were achieved, instead of the "Victory Peace" on which the Allies are determined things would remain exactly as they were before the war. Germany, whose professors have preached the holiness of war with as much eloquence as President Wilson has bestowed on his "Covenant of Peace," would remain exactly the same Germany which for fifty years has dreamed of World Domination and plotted for the war which she eventually started. Mr. Wilson's eloquence, therefore, has no practical bearing on the present situation; nor do we think that his dream can ever come true. It presupposes eternal stability in the Powers as they exist to-day, while we know that nations, like individuals, are subject to growth and decay. As long as human nature remains as it is there are nations which will turn to luxury and enervating pursuits in peace, while other nations will encourage industry

and enterprise. Soon or late a time must arrive when the unfit must give place to the fit, and no pacifist has ever yet suggested a means whereby the unfit can be pushed aside by the fit without friction. Under the dreamlike peace which President Wilson hopes for a country like Turkey would be irremovable. Its tax-gatherers might go on extorting the last piece of coin from its subjects; sloth might spread like some huge malodorous weed over the community; its resources might remain undeveloped; and still there is no power which would be permitted to push this nation out of a Europe for which it is unfitted. The "Covenant of Peace" is only a splendid dream. It would dissolve and fade away under the searching rays of the sun of Progress.

IN this number will be found an article by Professor Biffen which gives a few valuable and interesting hints about growing spring wheat. If they are attended to the writer says good results may be expected. The main point is that the wheat, being a comparatively short period in the ground, has not time to search for nourishment with its roots, therefore its food must be placed within easy reach. In other words, it should be planted with a good tilth and a good manuring. The manure recommended for general use is basic slag or superphosphate of lime, to be followed by a dressing of sulphate of ammonia when the plants have formed two or three leaves. It was shown in last week's issue that Dr. Edwards gave his wheat a dressing of 30cwt. to the acre of sulphate of ammonia, having previously used muriate of potash and bone meal. Finally, Professor Biffen reminds the grower that to secure a thick plant the sowing should not be so thin as in autumn. He recommends that the seed rate should amount to at least three bushels per acre. The varieties for the earliest possible planting are Red Marvel and Red Fife. After the middle of March, April Bearded and Red Fife may be sown. As seed is very short, farmers should try to obtain it as far as possible from their neighbours, especially those which peculiarly suit the locality.

"VICTORY."

"Oh, waves at my feet, coming in, coming in—
Tell me what of the fight? Do we win?"
"The mist lies low and the night is near
To-morrow may make the outcome clear."

"Oh, what are the ships that are fighting out there,
Whose great guns boom through the trembling air?"
"So many are fighting, I cannot say,
You will know by the wreckage at break of day!"

"What of the men, you have seen stricken dead,
There is one so tall with a fine dark head?—"
"I have given so many their winding-sheet,
To-morrow perchance he may drift to your feet."

"Oh, waves, coming in, coming in, coming in,
Give me news of the fight. Do we win?"
"Your lover is drowned—but you win."

M. G. MEUGENS.

OUR readers will be glad to know that the second part of Mr. Muirhead Bone's drawings of "The Western Front" is now ready. Among the pictures of supreme historical interest which it contains are Amiens Cathedral, the "Parthenon of Gothic Architecture"; a fine view of British troops on the march to the Somme; and sketches of scenes at many French villages which have become familiarised to us during the war. But, indeed, there is nothing in the volume which has not historical importance. How faithfully Mr. Muirhead Bone has rendered the war and made a record of it for the future will be understood by a visit to his "Exhibition of War Drawings Executed in France in 1916" at the Colnaghi Gallery, New Bond Street, which was opened by Mr. Forster on Tuesday last, January 23rd. These drawings show the artist at his very best, fully alive to the dignity and responsive to the inspiration of his task.

IT becomes more and more evident that the country, and especially those who are engaged in farming, require a full and complete statement of the Government war regulations in relation to husbandry. These rules are at present in a very fragmentary condition, and the cultivator has not access to any speech or document which gives them in full. It should be the first business of the Board of Agriculture to draw up a complete statement of the requirements incidental to a state of war. It would be necessary to state exactly

what inducements are held out to grow potatoes; what securities are given against the pillage of the middleman; and the maximum price of the retailer—that is, the shop-keeper—as well as the producer—that is, the farmer. Until this is done, to all the crops which the farmer grows there must be a great deal of avoidable trouble and confusion. Moreover, such a statement as we suggest would help the originators of the policy to give it balance and completeness. It may be not only helpful but necessary to impose limitations, but if so they must be applied logically so that all may benefit by them.

MR. H. J. ELWES, in the *Quarterly Journal of Forestry*, gives a food producing "tip" which may be found useful to those who possess young plantations. Mr. Elwes was

led to the experiment by observing that after replanting woods which have been cleared of timber and which have a good deposit of humus rank growing weeds quickly fill the vacant space between the lines of young trees, even when the ground has previously been quite bare. This led him to plant potatoes for one or two seasons between the lines. He found that the growth of the trees, especially ash trees, is distinctly encouraged by the earthing up and cultivation of the potatoes. He is therefore carrying out the plan on a much larger scale than usual this season. For manure he uses the wood-ashes produced from burning the branches of the felled trees, which must have an excellent effect if used as soon as made on account of the potash. It may be explained that the planting plan of Mr. H. J. Elwes is 5ft. by 5ft., the mixture being one beech to two larch.

SETTLING JACK AND TOMMY ON THE LAND

IT is good to know that amid all the wrangling over potatoes and prices preparations are steadily going on for settling discharged sailors and soldiers on the land. At Sunk Island, the estate about eighteen miles from Hull which has been chosen for the first settlement, building and laying out are in progress, although a temporary stoppage has been caused by the exceptional inclemency of January. It consists of about 2,300 acres, and the land is good though rather on the heavy side. There is a local tradition that ages ago Sunk Island was submerged during a great flood, but whether that be so or not, it was in modern days, probably about a hundred years ago, reclaimed from the water.

Proceedings so far have only been of a tentative nature. The idea seems to be that of beginning by farming the land as a whole and gradually establishing on it those men who develop capacity. At present there is no way of visualising the applicants, who are likely to be as miscellaneous in their origin as in their qualifications. Yet there are a few principles that may be of use to all. First, I would say that if they are to be induced to come on the land the two essentials to provide them with are

COMFORT AND INTEREST.

Of these, comfort depends most on income, interest on employment. They can only be secured by making it a *sine qua non* that the applicant to be successful must be fond of country life, i.e., if induced by higher wages to live in town he would regret the pleasures of the country. It is necessary to say this because before the Commission began its sifting a lot of nonsense was talked about brightening up the country by providing it with urban amusements. A man is most interested in life when he is called on to do only those things he likes doing. This is as true of one condition as another. Mr. Bonar Law would probably be very unhappy as Archbishop of Canterbury, as unhappy as Mr. Balfour would be in the rôle of "a merchant in his counting house, counting out his money." So to descend from great things to small, the man who takes naturally to breeding rabbits and fowls would hate being in a boot factory. The moral of this is that since there will be great variety in the idiosyncrasies of the men, what has to be avoided in partitioning the land is

UNIFORMITY.

For example, it would be the gravest error to make the holdings on Sunk Island of uniform size, say, fifteen acres; especially if partially disabled men are to have a chance. For them suitable work, such as intensive poultry keeping, French gardening, fruit and vegetables under glass, would require only a small area. On the other hand, it would demand very hard and constant labour for any man to make a decent livelihood by ordinary mixed husbandry on fifteen acres. The holdings should be varied in size to suit the use to which they are put and the working capacity of the holder. A man lacking a leg or an arm might conceivably make a livelihood from the land, but it would be from a cultivation that was centralised round his fowl runs or his beehives, his clothes, or his greenhouse. Requirements in regard to land will not be identical even among those who are whole. At the enquiry made by the Departmental Committee there was not called as witness a single person (unless I

have missed him) who could tell how he had made a small holding pay by going out of the beaten track. Yet there are thousands who could do so.

THE DEMONSTRATION FARM AND THE TRIAL PLOT.

I understand part of the land is to be used for demonstration purposes, and with this object I have the greatest sympathy. But it can be achieved by a better method. That is, to make each holder his own experimentalist. Get him into the habit of making a little trial plot of his own when told that his method is not the best. Take a very simple illustration. Most potato growers are aware that in potato growing a good increase in return is obtained by using muriate of potash, and if the commercial article cannot be obtained, a cheap substitute may be used in the shape of newly made or well kept wood ashes. Let him who doubts plant a thousand yards in his own way and ten yards with the potash. In friendly discussion with his neighbours the relationship between the additional expense and the increase of value in the results will quickly be brought out. Once he has tested a simple elementary thing like that he will easily be induced to test for himself the value of any manure, however little he may have known of it previously. And the lessons will be brought home as they never would be by a demonstration done by somebody else.

THE NECESSITY OF ECONOMY.

The urgent need of economy should be drilled into the ears of those who are to manage the settlement. Were the riches of Golconda at the back, failure must ensue unless the average holder can make a decent livelihood. No one will grudge the Parliamentary grant made for the purpose of helping our gallant sailors and soldiers settling on the land. But after the start it must be self-supporting. It does not require "a witch of a guesser" to foresee that when peace comes and munition making is ended the Treasury will hold a much lightened purse on which heavy demands will be made for the payment of interest. Great Britain has played the part of rich uncle to Europe on a scale that dwarfs the expenditure of Napoleonic days. Even when this fact is steadily kept in mind there is no cause for despair. Foodstuffs are bound to be higher in price for many years to come, and those engaged in their production should flourish with the most ordinary prudence. But it should be assumed that in the end establishment charges would fall on the newly formed community. It would be most interesting to know if this was fully taken into account when the cost was counted.

COTTAGES IN PAIRS.

This little digression on economy preludes an appeal for greater expenditure. Thrift was wrongly applied when it led the Treasury to reject the proposal of self-contained houses because it was cheaper to build in pairs. It is a much hated arrangement. Just imagine it! "R. L. S." once declared that the friendship of a lifetime would not stand the enforced companionship of a walking tour. And that is nothing to the enforced presence during a lifetime of a neighbour who practically shares your house. In the village it is different, because there is a choice from among all the inhabitants of a street. But the worst and most lasting quarrels take place when two neighbours are next

door to each other and secluded from the rest of the world. Besides it takes away alike from the profit and the charm. A small holding is at its best when the cottage is set with its garden all round, from which a wicket gate leads into the meadow. Any farmer will tell you the home paddock, however tiny, is the most valuable of his fields—a run for his pigs, hens, ducks and geese, a rearing place for his chickens, the centre of all the stock-rearing side of *la petite culture*. Live things do not discriminate between the right pasture and the wrong, and how often is a deadly quarrel founded upon the misdoings of such little creatures as the chickens, that have a diabolical cleverness of getting into places where they are not wanted, such as seed beds, growing salad plants and the like. No; this is a piece of very bad economy,

and I hope even an iron Treasury will repent of it. But for the general plan and idea there is nothing but praise. Only an idea is not valuable except when it is intelligently and persistently applied. What is required here is that the director of the establishment will bring to bear on it not only all his common-sense, but also enthusiasm and an open eye and mind for progress in the art of husbandry. There is very good reason for believing that Mr. Dowling, who, I understand, is to take charge of the adventure, will not be lacking in these qualities. In Norfolk he had good experience of managing small holdings, and I feel sure that he will do his best to carry these forward a stage and make them at once more profitable and more pleasant than anything of the kind that has hitherto been established in Great Britain. P.

THE AGRICULTURAL MUDDLE

AS we go on, every day sees an accentuation of the great inconvenience in developing piecemeal an agricultural policy for war-time. The practice is leading to contradictions that in times when a higher standard of consistency was maintained would have led to resignations. On January 18th Mr. Prothero at Newport made an ingenious defence of the price he had fixed for next year's potatoes. He pointed out that potatoes were the one crop which in this country could be grown far beyond our needs. It is a perishable crop, and we have not the machinery to convert it into meal or make potato spirit of it for commercial purposes as the Germans do. It was impossible to put up the machinery for these purposes all at once.

He went on to argue that when a man in Monmouthshire or Gloucestershire said: "It will cost me £40 to grow from four to six tons of potatoes per acre on my land, and your price is not enough," his answer to him was "Don't do it." The reason he gave was that there are parts of the country where a return of ten tons per acre could be obtained at an expenditure of £30, so he had fixed the price of potatoes in order that on land unsuitable for this crop they might grow beans, peas, oats, or any other crop that would pay. On these lines he developed a strong and plausible argument which the farmers thought very reasonable. The present writer met a lot of them on Thursday, the day on which this speech was reported, and they were extremely pleased with what Mr. Prothero had done. But in Saturday's papers a very different story was told.

Captain Bathurst, who is Lord Devonport's Parliamentary Secretary, speaking to a crowded audience at Salisbury, completely upset the argument put forward by the President of the Board of Agriculture. His speech had been heralded by an official announcement on the part of the Food Controller to the effect that the fixing of prices had been further considered in view of the possibility of an unfavourable season. In it Lord Devonport had stated that "it has been decided accordingly that the prices named for potatoes shall not be regarded as contract prices, but as minimum prices guaranteed by the Government for potatoes of the first quality." According to Captain Bathurst there had been a consultation between the three departments of the Board of Agriculture and the Minister of Food. He explained that "The reason why the price was reconsidered was that they realised that potatoes were always a very speculative crop."

One cannot help asking if Mr. Prothero with all his experience had not also learned that potatoes were a very speculative crop. Captain Bathurst went on to say that "neither Lord Devonport nor himself would be responsible for saying that the prices stated in the Press would not be the prices actually paid to farmers for their potato crop. They might be, or they might not be." In this there is an inimitable touch of the rural wiseacre. Never did a subordinate set aside the ruling of a President of the Board of Agriculture in more irresponsible manner. Instead of expressing any sympathy with the President's apprehension that there might be a glut of potatoes, resulting in a loss, Captain Bathurst said: "The Food Control Department wanted it understood that they were anxious to give every encouragement to farmers to produce the particular crops, especially potatoes and oats, which they believed the nation would want this year. In no way did they want to do anything which would stand in the way of those crops being

grown." Here is a direct and flat contradiction which is in urgent need of explanation.

Nothing had changed in the situation between the delivery of Mr. Prothero's speech at Newport and the publication of the new Food Regulations. It would be very interesting to know if the President of the Board of Agriculture was aware that the Food Controller and his Parliamentary Secretary were about to give him away so absolutely. It is not worth while elaborating the point, because there are many more important matters to think about just now, but the conclusion to be drawn is obvious. Mr. Prothero and his staff, as we said last week, would have gone about their work in a more satisfactory manner if, instead of dealing with the questions of the hour piecemeal, they had set themselves to draw up a scheme, the best they could devise, for the guidance of agriculture during the war. This would have shown the farmers once and for all what was expected of them and what they could do. After that it might be left to their choice whether they devoted their land to the production of wheat, other spring cereals, or potatoes. In regard to the last mentioned, there still, despite anything Captain Bathurst might say, remains a great possibility that there will be a glut of potatoes in the autumn, and the difficulty will be found in obtaining the minimum price now set by the President of the Board of Agriculture. Mr. Prothero's reasoning was quite good; his fault lay in not having worked out his problem quickly enough and laid before the country a scheme that would enable everyone to know exactly where he stood. The course pursued has led to any amount of vacillation and hesitation among the farmers. To our personal knowledge, on the issue of the statement that £5 15s. was to be the contract price for potatoes, several growers in the Shires who had arranged to plant from fifty to three hundred acres countermanded their orders for manure and seed and reorganised their plans so as to grow other crops. It is no easy matter for them to change round once more. The spring sowing and planting season is coming fast upon us, and plans for it, if they are to be effective, should be laid well beforehand. During these weeks of January frost the prudent farmer has been by no means idle, even though his men and horses may not have been working.

The fact is that those in authority have done nothing more than produce muddle. Hope lies in the direction that the British farmer, who, after all, has been long accustomed to take his own independent path, may rise to the occasion and, in spite of the Board of Agriculture and its advisers, produce more food in the autumn than can reasonably be expected at the present moment. According to a well known weather proverb, a stormy January is an omen of better weather than a mild January. Last year at this time the roses were growing and many flowers were blowing prematurely in the gardens, yet everybody remembers what a terrible season followed. This year January has been a threatening and most inclement month; but the lore of the countryman says that is, generally speaking, the prelude to a fine spring. January snow, in other words, is often followed by March dust, a handful of which is still, in the words of the old saw, worth a king's ransom. Therefore we do not despair of the opportunity which will be afforded of cultivation in the coming months, and we earnestly ask the farmers to neglect the Board of Agriculture and all its works and go on steadily growing food for the people of whatever kind they find most convenient to their land and circumstances.

As yet no preparations that we know of have been made for ensuring the interests of the consumer. If a minimum price is guaranteed it is only reasonable that a maximum also should be fixed; otherwise the whole arrangement, or rather

lack of arrangement, will simply tend to fill the pockets of the middleman. The Government ought to announce at once that a maximum price alike to retailer and consumer will be fixed as soon as the character of the crop is ascertained.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON SPRING PLANTING

BY PROFESSOR BIFFEN.

WITHIN the next few weeks farmers will have to come to some decision with regard to the cereal crops to be sown in the spring. In these times it is no simple matter for anyone to decide on the best course to pursue in the nation's interest as well as his own. The whole position is so obscure that one hesitates about making any recommendations which might have the effect of altering anyone's usual routine of cropping. But a few facts bearing on the immediate and the future supply of cereals stand out so clearly that they must be taken into consideration in deciding on the extent to which the various kinds should be planted. The most important of these is that there is a world-wide shortage of wheat. Not only did our own crop fail to give the yield it promised in the summer months, but much of the American crop succumbed to the attacks of rust, and drought irretrievably damaged the crops of the Southern Argentine. Some idea of the extent of the shortage can be gathered from the report recently published by the Bureau of Statistics of the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome. This shows that the total crop of the Northern Hemisphere amounted to 877,706 thousands of quintals (a quintal is almost exactly one-tenth of a ton) as against 1,095,408 in 1915, while the average for the five year period 1909-13 was 925,316. The corresponding figures for the Southern Hemisphere are not known with any accuracy for 1916, but for 1915 and the same five year period they were 96,363 and 74,163 quintals respectively. If we may assume that these regions will produce an average crop—and it is an optimistic assumption to make—then the world's crop amounts to 951,869 thousands of quintals against 1,191,771 in the previous year, and a five year average of 994,542. Under normal conditions the world's population would require for food and re-seeding 1,044,182 thousands of quintals in the year 1916-17. The deficiency in sight, then, is roughly the whole crop of the Southern Hemisphere. It may possibly be made up from the reserves left over from the previous season's crop, but at the best these will be exhausted.

The position with regard to both barley and oats is more satisfactory, for in each case the world's crop is slightly larger than the average for the period 1909-13. In normal times, then, one would have little hesitation in suggesting that the farmer should plant as great an area of wheat as possible, knowing that prices would inevitably be high. Now, however, one has to recognise that the import of cereals may be considerably curtailed, and one has to consider what the nation is most likely to need after the harvest we must prepare for. Under ordinary circumstances the nation has to import roughly four times as much wheat as we grow, about the same quantity of barley as the home crop itself produces, and only a third of the oats. The demand for more wheat obviously becomes more and more insistent. Oats, too, are badly needed, for the position is not as favourable as it appears to be, owing to the enormous requirements of the Army. The position with regard to the barley crop is more difficult to ascertain. We can ignore the pitiable controversy which brewers and teetotallers have seen fit to engage in, and state briefly that even if we are prepared to do without alcohol in the form of drink there may still be the need of enormous quantities for the manufacture of munitions as well as supplies of grain for feeding purposes.

It would require someone with the gift of prophecy to say just how much of our arable area should be devoted to each of these crops to secure the best all-round result. My own feeling is that the greatest of the nation's needs is likely to be for more wheat, and I have not hesitated about upsetting the system of rotations in order to plant as great an area as possible. This has involved the sacrifice of almost the whole of the area which would ordinarily have

gone down to barley. This course would probably have been adopted by many others, but the weather of the past autumn and winter has been against it, and it has been practically impossible to plant up even the normal wheat area in most districts. It will now be difficult to make up leeway by sowing the ordinary autumn wheats.

There is still time to do this if only the weather conditions are favourable between now and the middle of February. Up to this date there is every chance of securing a satisfactory crop from these varieties. They may be planted even up to the end of that month, but there is a certain amount of risk with so late a sowing, and it is wiser to fall back on the use of some one or the other of the rapidly growing spring wheats. There are relatively few farmers who have had much experience with these varieties, for in the days when there was no great inducement to grow wheat no one worried much if the usual breadth could not be sown in the autumn. It was a simple matter to make up the deficiency with either oats or barley. Those who used them as emergency crops often made a bad choice of the variety to be sown, or grew it poorly, with the result that spring wheats have acquired a bad name for themselves. They are frequently roundly condemned as bad yielders on altogether inadequate grounds. It is true that no spring wheat ever produces the large crops one can obtain under favourable circumstances from autumn wheats. Yet crops of over 50 bushels can be grown even from sowings made as late as the middle of April. Unfortunately, the average yield per acre is not known with any certainty. It appears to be about 30 bushels, a figure which compares more favourably with the 32 bushels obtained from autumn wheats than most people would expect. Now, even if this average is considered to be low, it is not to be despised, for it gives a greater weight of grain per acre than an average crop of either barley or oats. The average barley crop is some 33½ bushels, weighing altogether about 1,800lb., while the oat crop, averaging about 41½ bushels, only weighs 1,670lb. Thus the weight of the grain from a 28 bushel crop of wheat is equivalent to that of an average crop of barley, while a 26 bushel crop will produce as much as an average crop of oats. The wheat has this advantage, too, that its grain weight is not made up of the useless scales which enclose the kernel of both oats and barley. Putting all the facts together, they establish a strong case for attempting to grow more than our usual supply of wheat in the season before us.

The cultivation of spring wheats gives satisfactory results if a few points are attended to. They prefer well worked soil and they require an ample supply of food materials during their short growing period. Except on thoroughly fertile soils, this should consist of phosphates in the form of basic slag or superphosphate of lime, to be followed by a dressing of sulphate of ammonia when the plants have formed some two or three leaves. Thick sowing is advisable, and the seed rate should amount to at least 3 bushels per acre.

A great deal depends on the choice of the variety to be sown. The various kinds have been described lately in the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society for 1915 and in the leaflets of the Board of Agriculture dealing with spring wheats. There is consequently no need to refer to them in great detail, but the fact must be emphasised that the best results are obtained from Red Marvel and Red Fife by planting as early as possible; while for later sowings, say, after the middle of March, April Bearded and Red Fife are the most suitable sorts. There are several others which may be used for spring planting, but the stocks of seed appear to be so low that it is hardly worth while to refer to them. Some of these are curiously local in their distribution, and consequently will be more or less unobtainable by the majority of farmers, but to those in the neighbourhoods where they are grown they should be especially valuable.

“CASTERS”

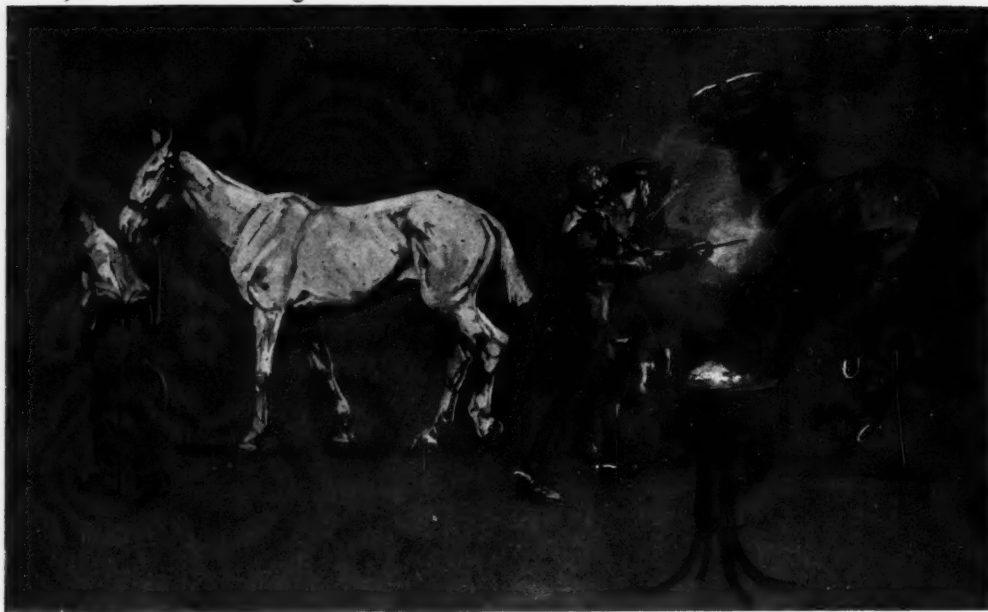
THE EQUINE ROAD TO RUIN

QUESTIONS have been asked recently in the House of Commons concerning the sale of horses worn out by war service to native dealers in Eastern countries. The sad fate which awaits animals thus doomed to a life of hard usage is well known, and it looks as if war, instead of blunting the conscience of the people, as some have feared might be the case, has made it more tender. The concern displayed in the fate of horses which have “done their bit” is an instance, in fact, of a more intelligent interest now taken by the public in many subjects which have been hitherto ignored, for the sale of cast horses to natives in various parts of the Empire (India, for example) was not unknown in pre-war days.

The cynic might find excuse for ironical comment in the fact that for the moment it is only war horses on whose behalf sentimental compassion has been aroused. The fate of the worn-out horse, whether a military or civilian animal, is always a sad one, and there is no particular reason, apart

from sentimentality, why he should be less kindly considered in time of peace than in warfare. It is, unfortunately, a fact, though many people choose to ignore it, that most horses fall by successive stages into less and less kindly hands as their value (*i.e.*, their decreasing soundness with advancing age) becomes less. Year by year they steadily decline from bad to worse, “dropping down the ladder rung by rung.”

Consider, for example, the case of the average hunter. Born on a farm, he lives a life of ease until three or four years



BRANDING CAST HORSES WITH “C.”



ON THE WAY TO AUCTION.



GOING FOR AN OLD SONG, BUT WELL WORTH BUYING TO BREED FROM.

old. Then he is broken, well or badly according to the knowledge and nature of his owner, and is sold. Probably the purchaser is a dealer who "makes him" as a hunter. Then he is bought by a hunting man, and in the great majority of cases the latter keeps him as long as he is sound. So far this horse has lived in luxury, but he now begins to go a little unsound—in the time-honoured phrase, "he is no longer as young as he used to be." So his owner sells him, probably to a dealer of another sort. This man lets him out as a hunter at so much a day. Here begins a hard life for the horse, although he is not ill-treated except by some unthinking idiot who is determined to get his full two-guineas' worth out of him. As a hiring hunter the animal probably lasts for several years. Then once more he is sold. Very likely he now goes between the shafts of a cab, or if really worn out is picked up for next to nothing by a small-holder to work on the latter's plot of land, and to carry coals, market produce and his owner's family. Thus begins a never-ending round of work on a starvation diet, for it is obvious that a man who only just scratches a living for himself, cannot afford to feed his horse generously. At the end of this phase comes the knacker, who provides for most horses a welcome release. It will be seen therefore, that the life of the average horse usually has an unhappy ending, and the Army horse is no worse off than any other. Indeed, until he actually gets into the fighting area, the Army horse is better treated on the whole, for he is kept under conditions that are fairly good, and, as a rule, while in the Army he is in the hands of men who have had previous experience of horses, and although he may be hard worked, he does not suffer from insufficiency of food or errors of diet. With horses as with soldiers, it is when they leave the Service that they often begin to fall on evil days.

Horses are cast from the Army for a variety of reasons, of which the principal ones are being worn out, unsound, or vicious. The critic ignorant of the conditions under which the Remount Service works may ask why unsound or vicious animals are ever bought. It should be pretty obvious, however, that if a man is instructed to buy so many hundred horses at, say, £50 and in no case to give more than £75 (these figures are purely imaginary) he must give, in order to make up a good average quality, more than the scheduled price in many cases, and a great deal less, in consequence, for one or two. It is generally the latter which are presently cast from the Service.

The case of the vicious animal is rather different. In the midst of war, with its continuous demand for more men and more horses, the Army has no time to waste on breaking-in really vicious animals, though under other circumstances these might be trained to usefulness. Hence their sale.

What usually happens is that an aged horse is perhaps found to be not "doing" well. No amount of attention to his teeth and diet succeeds in putting any flesh or muscle on him, and very little work makes him go unsound. A recommendation is made that he should be cast, and if this is



UNDER THE HAMMER.

approved by the Senior Veterinary Officer, he is branded on the quarter with a large C and sent away with a batch of others to be sold by public auction. I have seen many of these sales, and, as a lover of horses, always found them rather pathetic spectacles. There is such a contrast between the sleek mount of the officer in charge, and the weary procession which follows him. Among the decrepits of which the column

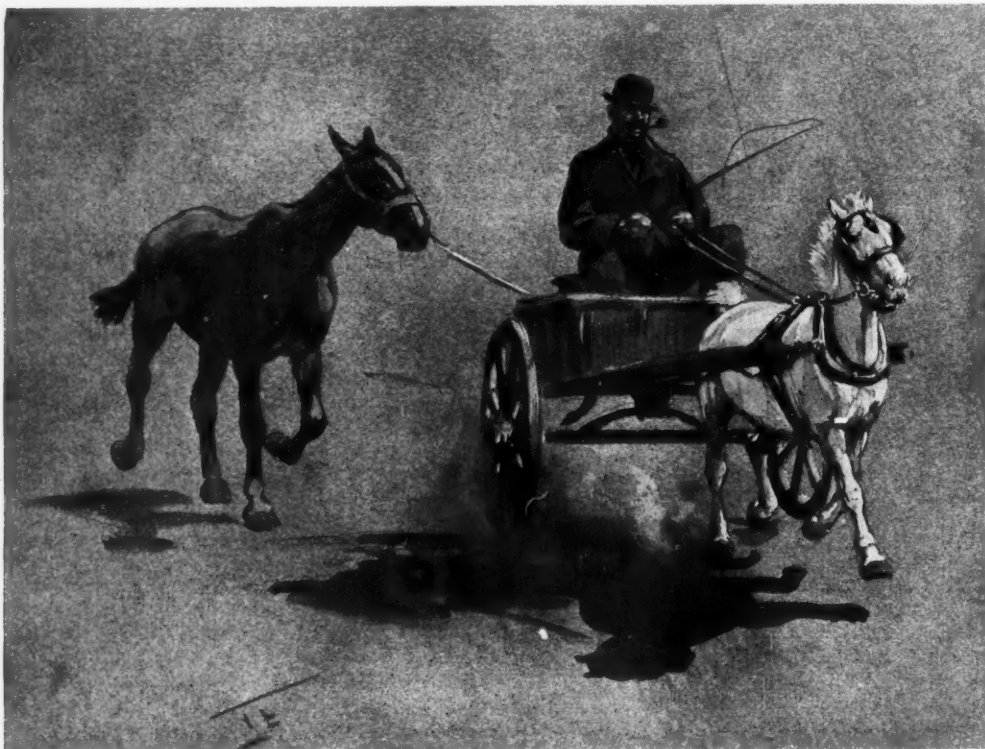
light behind!" The suggestion conveyed is probably a good deal less than the actual truth.

The crowd at these auction sales is always of interest. All sorts and conditions of men seem to be drawn together by the prospect of buying a horse cheap, apart from that numerous fraternity which seems drawn, as by a magnet, to any public auction of whatever nature, despite the fact that they never appear to buy anything.

The prices realised afford interesting comparisons, for, of course, all animals are sold without warranty or reserve. Riding horses and thoroughbreds fetch very little; for, obviously, if they are too unsound to ride they are not much good for anything else. I am afraid those come off worst which are bought by smallholders, market gardeners, etc., to pull little fruit carts and so forth. Or they may be bought by small men among the dealers, who give, say £5 for a horse and sell him again for £6 10s. If such resale is achieved quickly, the dealer makes a good profit, but a horse soon eats a sovereign or two in these days, so a quick resale is essential. On this kind of animal no one will give a dealer a big profit.

I was witness not long ago of a very quick profit made in this way. A small dealer picked up a cast horse at a sale for £4, and took it away hobbling behind his little cart. Later on I passed the cart with the "caster" tied up behind, outside a public house, within which the dealer was doubtless refreshing himself. Shortly afterwards the cart overtook me, its owner driving like Jehu, without the purchased animal. As he rattled by he turned a face beaming with beer and benevolence towards me and shouted, "I sold 'im. Twenty shillings profit, not too dusty!" What balance of profit would remain in his pocket by the time he got home seemed doubtful.

A few broken down but well bred mares are bought for breeding purposes, sometimes being secured for less than £10. One could wish that more people were alive to the possibilities here, and that more mares were bought for breeding purposes, in view of days to come. Light and heavy draught horses fetch good prices though unsound. They realise from £20 to £40, for although useless for road



HIS PURCHASE.



THE "CASTER" IS LEFT OUTSIDE WHILE NEGOTIATIONS FOR RE-SALE ARE CONDUCTED.

is chiefly composed one will probably note a few animals which look fit, well and young, and betray no sign of lameness. There are many things which may be wrong with them, but probably these are the "funny-tempered" ones, and the officer in charge may be heard warning off prospective purchasers who wish to examine the legs of these doubtful characters too closely: "Mind the roan, there, he's a trifle

work they can work on the land, without pain to themselves in most cases, and are therefore bought by farmers.

Vicious animals always command a sale, because every man thinks he can break a horse; and no doubt by keeping them short of food and water, by inflicting overwork upon them, and by other drastic methods which are not allowed in the Army, many of these animals in time are made submissive slaves on the land.

Mules usually fetch only small prices. There seems to be a great prejudice against a mule in this country, which dies hard. This is a pity, for the mule is a most useful animal, as any soldier will tell you. He is subject to few ailments, is hardy, and not only lives but thrives on poor food. He should consequently be the poor man's ideal servant.

Despite this prejudice against mules, however, a fat one will always fetch something; they are, I believe, bought by small dealers for their flesh. Horse and mule flesh (apart from fat, hide and bones) are of considerable value for food, and for this reason even the unsoundest horse will always draw a bid. One may remark in passing that the number of butchers selling horse flesh has greatly increased of late owing to the influx into this country since the war of a much larger foreign population which has been accustomed to eat horse flesh. A demand always creates a supply. Personally,

as a horse lover, I could wish this demand to be even greater, and that unsound horses were fattened and killed for the butcher while still comparatively young, instead of going down and down as they pass from owner to owner.

The buyers at a sale of cast horses are of infinite variety. At one which I attended recently a lady bought a "caster" for £5. "Why did you buy that one?" asked the remount officer in charge after the hammer had fallen. "I could have shown you a much better animal which only fetched £9." "My dear Sir," was the reply, "I had only got £5 to spare!" To complete the story I may add that the animal was vicious, but is now, I hear, perfectly quiet with women, though turning savage the moment a man tries to handle it. Quite evidently some male ruffian had sadly ill-treated it in the past. The more I see of horses the more convinced I am that so-called viciousness is nothing but intense fear. It is none the less dangerous on that account.

Lest I should have depressed the reader, let me add that it by no means always follows that because a horse is cast he goes to a bad home. I know of one lucky beast at any rate. In a lady's stable recently I saw an old crock with the letter C branded on his shoulder. "Why on earth did you buy that old crock?" I asked. "Well," said the fair owner, "you see, he has such a pathetic old face!" W. B.

IN THE GARDEN

THE KITCHEN GARDEN: ABOUT BROAD BEANS.

THE Potato is apparently the only vegetable known to the daily newspapers, while less speculative and more nutritious crops seem quite ignored. This year should see an increased production in pulse crops beyond all other vegetables, for they are most excellent money-savers for those who eat less meat. What a contrast to the Potato, which is the first thing a doctor takes off the daily diet of his patients! The composition of Beans and Peas is vastly better than that of any root crop, for the simple reason that they contain more protein, and this is equivalent to meat. But beyond this is the remarkable fact that these leguminous crops, unlike other vegetables, are able to obtain much of their nutriment free of charge by virtue of beneficent bacteria which live in colonies on the roots and extract nitrogen from the air in the soil. Let it not for one moment be imagined that Peas and Beans do not require manure, for they certainly respond to moderate dressings of farmyard manure; but if overfed there is a tendency of the bacteria failing to do their duty.

The time is now at hand for sowing Broad Beans, also early Peas, and the treatment so far as soil preparation is concerned is much the same. In normal seasons Broad Beans are best sown in November, but the wet autumn and winter has been all against them. The secret of success with Broad Beans is to get them as early as possible, and to do this they should be sown on a warm, dry soil on the first favourable opportunity. Further sowings may be made until the middle of March, but it will be found that the earlier plants give the best return, as they are less liable to attack by the dreaded black fly, which never fails to put in an appearance. As soon as the flowers are open the growing shoots should be pinched out. This will keep the fly in check and at the same time help the pods to develop. It is not generally recognised that the Broad Bean is a deep rooting plant. Where time and labour allow, the ground should be trenched before sowing. Sow the seeds about 4 in. apart in drills—the plants will not succeed if overcrowded—and cover with 2 in. of fine soil. Three of the best varieties are Green Longpod, Green Windsor and Harlington Windsor.

POTATOES TO PLANT.

A very useful pamphlet on the cultivation of Potatoes which we would like to see in the hands of every cottage gardener and allotment holder in the country has just been issued by the Board of Agriculture, and readers of COUNTRY LIFE would be doing good service if they would make a point of distributing this leaflet among those who are specially interested. The Potato has been designated the "King of the Kitchen Garden," and few vegetables can be planted more profitably. It does best in moderately light soil with good drainage, rather rich without being rank. Those who must grow Potatoes in inferior clay soils under conditions not well suited for the crop are advised to select vigorous varieties, such as Epicure, Royal Kidney, Evergood, King Edward VII, Up-to-Date and Arran Chief. If the soil is in reasonably good condition the tubers may be planted as soon as the mild weather arrives in spring, but it is better to plant at the end of April with the land in good condition than early in March with the land in bad order.

The following is a list of reliable Potatoes which can be purchased from most dealers—Earliest varieties: Epicure, Early Puritan, Duke of York, Midlothian Early, May Queen, Sharpe's Express, Ninety-fold. Second earlies: Eclipse, Royal Kidney, British Queen, Conquest, Windsor Castle, Great Scot. Late

varieties: Sutton's Abundance, Evergood, King Edward VII, Up-to-Date, President, Arran Chief and Golden Wonder.

The President of the Board of Agriculture, who is receiving many offers of assistance with his schemes for increased food production, suggests that all persons who desire to offer their services should communicate with the Secretary of the local War Agricultural Committee at the offices of the County Council. The carrying out of the schemes will be entrusted to War Agricultural Committees in each county.

FRUIT TREES FOR THE NORTH WALL.

THE Morello Cherry is the one fruit tree recommended above all others for the north wall, but there is no reason why it should be planted, as it so often is, to the exclusion of other fruits. After all, it is not everyone who desires to grow Morello Cherries by the mile, and there are many fruits of far sweeter flavour that crop freely on a north wall. Gooseberries and Red and White Currants are excellent in such situations, they are very readily protected from birds, and what is of greater importance is that the fruits hang upon these trained trees in good condition long after those on the bushes in the open have disappeared. These fruits should be grown either as fan-shaped or cordon trees. Gooseberries and Red Currants bear their fruit on shoots and spurs of the previous year's growth, also on older spurs on the main shoots. In the case of the Gooseberry, the finest fruits are always borne on the young or previous year's wood, and this should be borne in mind when pruning.

Plums, including the delicious Gages, are also suitable for the north wall. They flower a little later than their namesakes on a south or east wall, and this is an advantage, as it may often mean that the flowers do not open until the danger of frost is past; moreover, the early morning sun does not reach them, and, as every gardener knows, it is the bright sun on a frosty morning that is responsible for so much damage to trees that are more exposed. It does not appear to be generally known that the old Green Gage and, what is better still as regards richness of flavour, Denniston's Superb may be grown quite well on a north wall, while few of our hardy fruit trees present less difficulties in their cultivation. Again, by growing dessert Cherries and Pears on a north wall the season of these fruits is considerably prolonged.

All of the foregoing fruit trees thrive well in a rather elevated position where they have the advantage of light and good natural drainage. Well drained borders are the most important consideration. It is useless trying to secure the best results on a sunless border where the soil is wet and heavy.

Now that the season for nailing up the trees is here, it is appropriate to mention how the trees must be fastened to the wall. In the first place, it should be noted that newly planted trees must not be permanently fastened, owing to the fact that the soil is sure to sink after planting, and this would have a most disastrous effect upon those trees the branches of which are nailed up. The old-fashioned way of nailing shoots to the wall with cloth shreds still finds favour in many well ordered gardens; but the cloth shreds afford a convenient harbour for harmful pests, and for this reason we prefer the use of wall nails with pliable heads, which can be wrapped over the branches to keep them in position. Yet another method is to fix against the wall a wire trellis, to which the trees may be tied, and this is perhaps the most favourable method of them all, since it saves time in training the trees and is also neat in appearance. H. C.



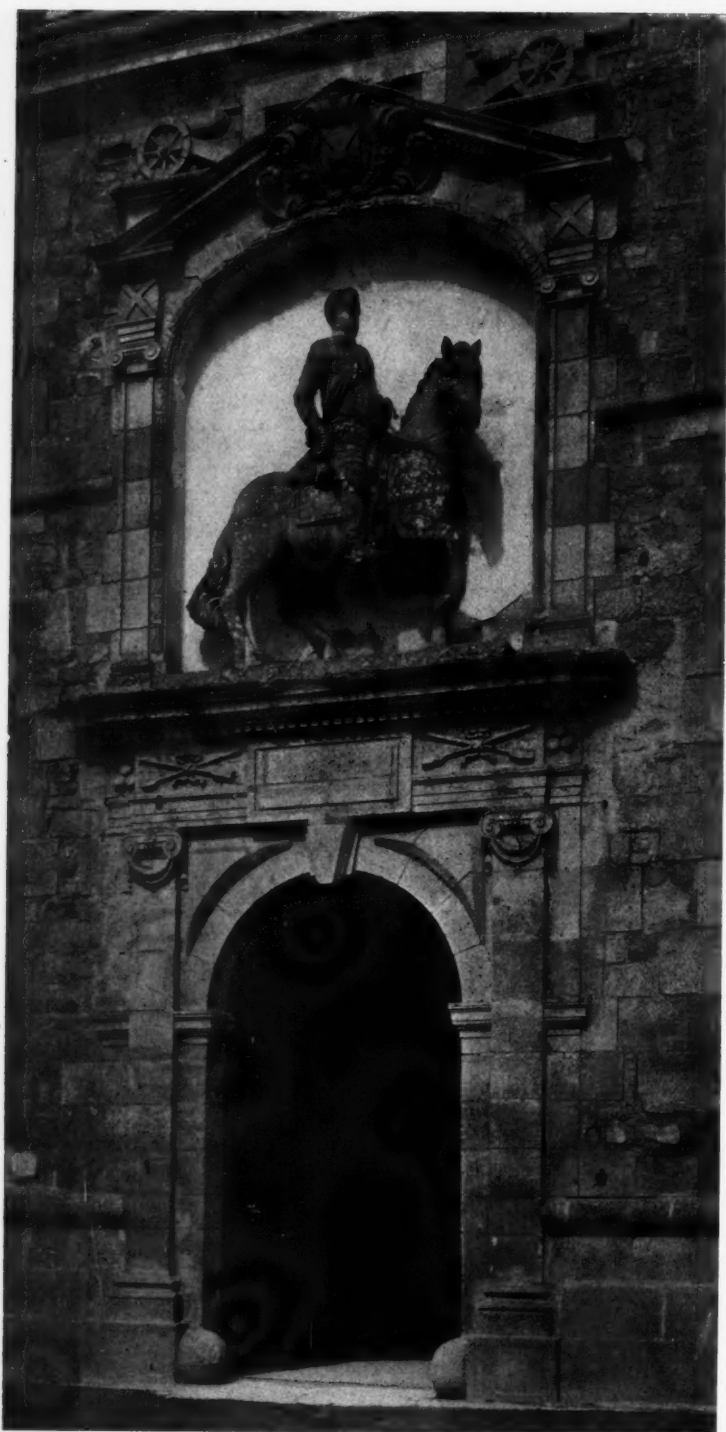
IN COUNTRY LIFE of October 25th, 1913, appeared illustrations of a château of Chaumont. The accompanying photographs illustrate another of the same name. Chaumont-la-Guiche or Chaumont-en-Charolais, though less

known and—it must be admitted—of somewhat slenderer architectural and historical interest than its namesake on the Loire, is yet well worthy, from both points of view, to figure in the COUNTRY LIFE series of Great French Houses. Nor is it surprising that the series should comprise two Chaumonts, for this is one of the commonest of French place names, a frequency partly explained by the fact that the word has no fewer than three separate derivations. Chaumont may stand, as in the case of Chaumont-sur-Loire, for *Calons mons*, a bald, i.e., unwooded height, for *Calidus mons*, a warm sun-steeped hill, or finally for *Culmen montis*, a hilltop. In the case of Chaumont-la-Guiche authorities differ as to the correct origin to assign to the name.

As early as the twelfth century there was a castle at Chaumont whose lords did homage for the fief to the Counts of Charolais and enjoyed the right of market at the castle gate; but it was not till 1425 that it came into the hands of the noble family which gives it its sub-title and with short intervals has held it from that time to the present day. The name of "La Guiche" derived from a neighbouring town is not to be confused with that of "Guiche," a title held by the house of Grammont. La Guiche bears *sable, a saltire or*.

If it never attained the very front rank, the house of La Guiche furnished a remarkable number of persons who rendered their country notable service in statecraft, in diplomacy and in arms, or who attained some distinction in the world of letters. And in its long and honourable history its representatives have more than once shown a combination of level-headedness and humanity, which enabled them to exert a moderating influence at times when passions ran high, while exercising a generous patronage of the liberal arts. The first La Guiche known to history is one Renaud, who served under Saint Louis in his first crusade, which sailed for Egypt in 1248. A century and a half later his descendant Gerard was a personage of some importance in the anarchic times of the mad King Charles VI. Serving under his feudal superior, John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy in 1408 against the revolted Liégeois, he was knighted by him on the field of battle as a reward of valour. He held the offices of Chamberlain in the Royal Household and of Bailli of Mâcon, a city with whose affairs the family were long intimately connected, and negotiated the treaty signed here in 1417 between Duke John and the Duke of Bourbon.

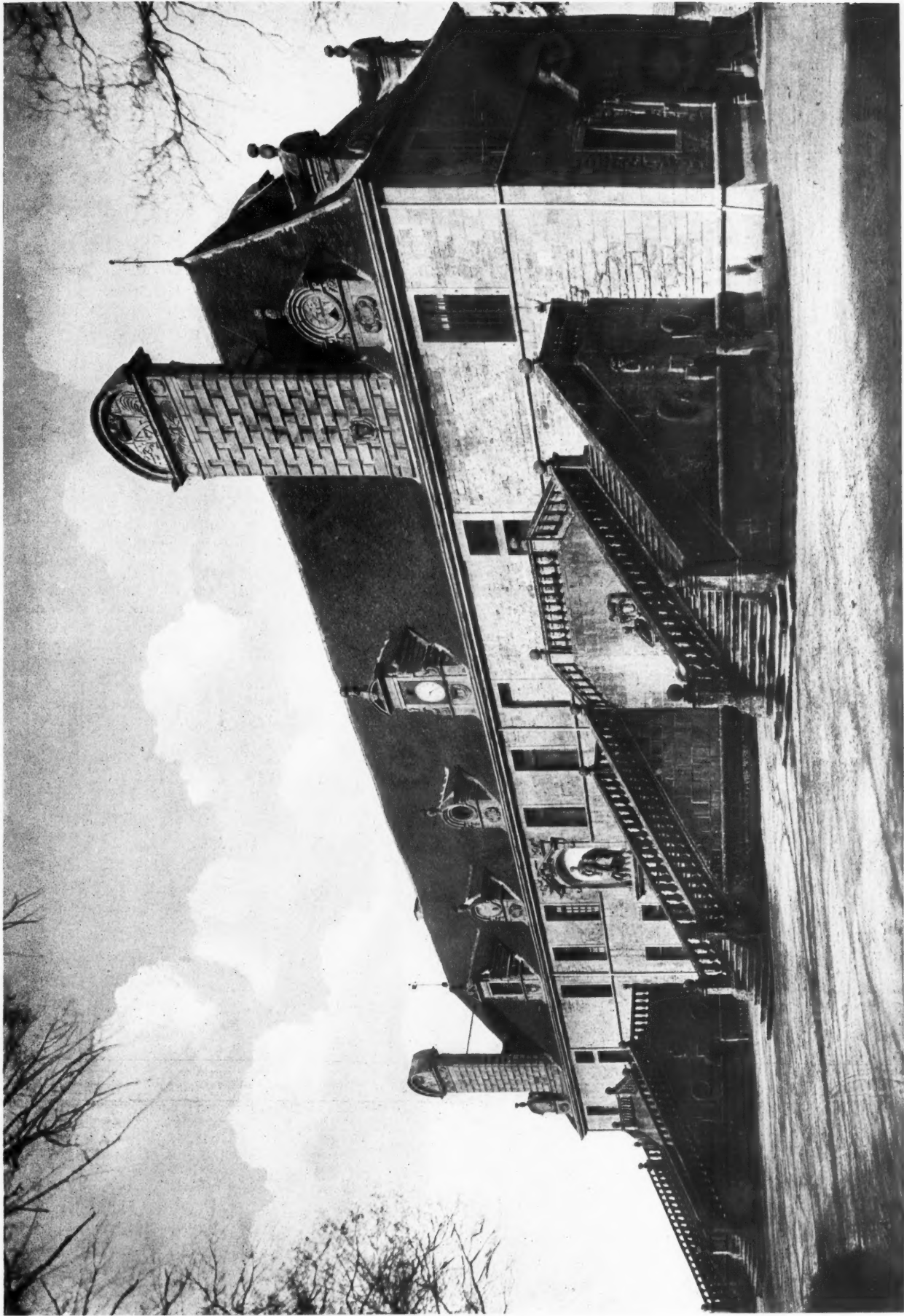
Claude de la Guiche, perhaps a son of this Gerard, it was, who a few years later purchased the castellany of Chaumont from its ancient "Sires." His son, Pierre, Bailli of Mâcon and Autun, had a long career of diplomatic activity, representing his sovereign successively at the Courts of Rome, Spain and England. He also concluded the treaties of Geneva and Fribourg (1515-16), in virtue of which the Swiss Cantons bound themselves to keep the French King supplied with levies of those sturdy mountaineers whose fame as a fighting asset was founded on their overthrow of the House of



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STATUE OF PHILIBERT DE LA GUICHE.

"C.L."



Copyright

THE STABLES.

COUNTRY LIFE

Burgundy at Grandson, Morat and Nancy. After Francis I's victory at Marignano, Pierre de la Guiche obtained from them a further force of 10,000 men whose march into Italy he himself conducted. Doubtless the profits accruing from such important public services were not inconsiderable, and he was thus enabled to undertake the rebuilding and embellishment of his house at Chaumont. But in a life of "journeyings often" he can hardly have been able to devote much time on

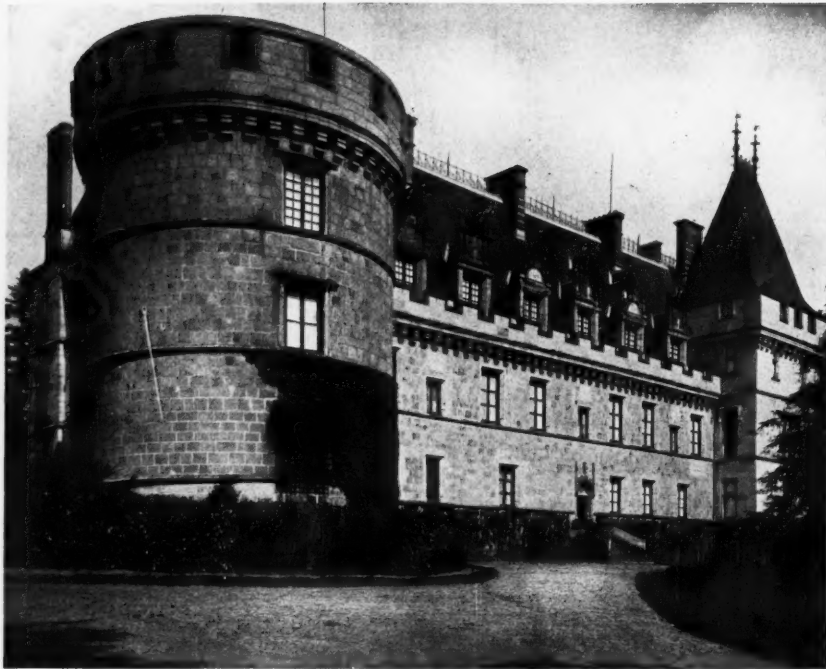
the spot to the supervision of the work. This may well be the reason why, if tradition is to be believed, he deputed it to Jacques, Abbot of Cluny and Bishop of Clermont, an uncle of his wife, Catherine de Chazeron, and a member of that celebrated house of Amboise, which played so important a part in introducing the arts of the Renaissance into France. He was one of seventeen children of whom one, Cardinal George, was the builder of Gaillon, and the eldest, Charles,

rebuilt Chaumont-sur-Loire. Thus another and somewhat unexpected link besides identity of name proves to exist between the two castles.

In the succeeding generation the most notable personality was another Claude, who, as was the wont of younger sons, adopted the ecclesiastical state, and became Bishop of Agde and later of Mirepoix. That preferment in his case was the reward of ability as well as of birth is shown by the fact that he was entrusted with the task of conducting embas-

sies to the Courts of Lisbon and of Rome, and to represent the French Church at the Council of Trent.

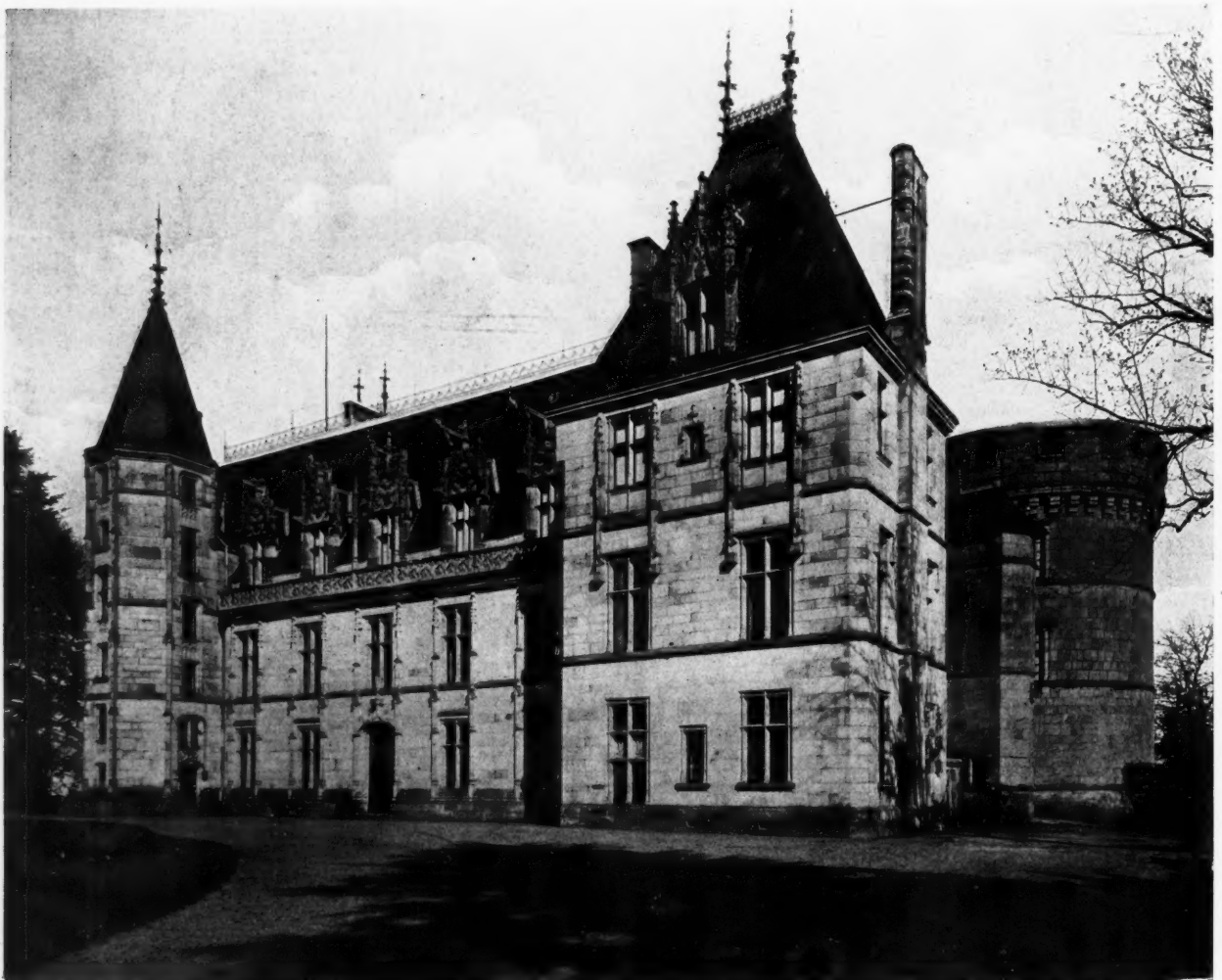
Philibert de la Guiche, grandson of Pierre and nephew of Claude, was one of the most remarkable men of his time. Born in 1540, and dying in 1607, he lived under six reigns, and his manhood coincided with one of the most troubled and sanguinary periods of his country's history. Throughout it he maintained an even tenor of useful service as an



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TOUR D'AMBOISE AND SOUTH FRONT.

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NORTH FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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CARVED PANEL OF 1530.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

administrator of the affairs of his own province, as a wise counsellor to his King, and as a vigorous and successful soldier. He succeeded at an early age to the posts of Bailli and Captain of the city of Mâcon, and it fell to him in these capacities to carry out the instructions issued at the Queen's Mother's instigation by Charles IX for the massacre of the local Huguenots. On August 24th, 1572, the slaughter began in Paris and for many weeks continued to break out in one provincial town after another. As these lines are written in a corner of fair France on St. Bartholomew's Eve 342 years later, French soil is once more red with French blood. But to-day a brutal foreigner is the aggressor and Frenchmen are united. It is good on this anniversary to unite the

memory of this Lord of Chaumont, who at the risk of disgrace, and even of death, refused to recognise the validity of the Royal order and saved the lives of many of his innocent countrymen.

This manly and independent conduct did not permanently prejudice him in the eyes of the Court, which was perhaps thankful to have been saved from some of the consequences of its blunder. At any rate, under Henry III his work won the respect of that unstable monarch, whose character was such a monstrous medley of religiosity and debauchery. He made him a knight of his new Order of the Holy Ghost and Grand Master of Ordnance, and admitted him to his counsels.



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THE GREAT SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

On May 9th, 1588, Paris was in uproar. The King, universally despised and distrusted, skulked in the Louvre, while Guise, the popular idol, who had been forbidden to approach the capital, rode in with eight other lords amid the acclamations of the populace. Henry, frantic with rage and fright, was plotting to have his unruly subject stabbed when he should present himself in the apartments of the Queen, Louise of Lorraine, his kinswoman. But La Guiche was able to dissuade him for the time being from a crime, which, however, a few months later he perpetrated at Blois to his own undoing.

On Henry of Valois' death La Guiche was one of those moderates who at once rallied to Henry of Navarre, by whom he was held in high esteem and to whom he rendered signal service in his fight for the crown, particularly at Arques and Ivry. The latter battle was won largely through

welfare of the neighbourhood, and to literary interests. She founded a house of Minimite Friars at La Guiche and endowed it with a fine library. Among its treasures was the splendid fifteenth century illuminated MS. of St. Augustine's "Cité de Dieu" as translated by Raoul de Presles for King Charles V, left to Minus by Louis Emmanuel's will and now the chief ornament of the library of Mâcon. The Duchess of Angoulême formed the centre of a provincial literary circle and was celebrated in the verses of the learned poet and historian Senece, for whom she provided a home in her house for thirty years. She had one child, Marie Françoise, who married the last of the Guises, Louis de Lorraine, Duke of Joyeuse, and died childless in 1696.

Before this time the estate of Chaumont had passed by marriage into the family of Schomberg and passed later on into that of Rohan-Guéméné, although the family of

La Guiche was not extinct in the direct male line. This is perhaps explained by the curious story of Bernard de la Guiche, nephew of the Duchess of Angoulême, who was mysteriously spirited away at his birth in 1641, and on attaining manhood only succeeded in establishing his title to a share in the family property after protracted litigation. He is the St. Gêran who moved in the same brilliant circle as Madame de Sévigné and La Rochefoucauld, and who figures in the pages of St. Simon. By his death without male issue in the same year as his cousin, the Duchess of Joyeuse, the line of La Guiche St. Gêran came to an end, and it was not till the middle of the eighteenth century that a La Guiche once more owned Chaumont.

Meanwhile, however, members of the family still resided in the Charolais and neighbouring districts, and one of them, Claude Elizabeth, who, in spite of his name, was of the male sex, left important works on the history of the Mâconnais. Since that day two members at least of the family have taken part in national politics. Louis Casimir, Marquis de la Guiche (1777-1843), was a Peer of France under the Restoration and played a certain part in the politics of that day, while his son sat as deputy for Charolles under Louis Philippe in the Chamber of 1846.

The history of the buildings of Chaumont la Guiche is unfortunately far less known than that of the family which built and lived in it. It is, in fact, almost confined to the few indica-

tions already given and such as may be derived from an inspection of the accompanying illustrations. An examination of the buildings themselves would doubtless throw light on obscure points, but this is obviously unattainable in the present year of grace, owing to *force majeure* in more forms than one.

There are the initial uncertainties as to whether the existing building incorporates any portion of the old castle of the mediæval Sires de Chaumont, and whether the first La Guiche owner carried out any building operations. Both these things may be the case, although the château as a whole is generally attributed to Pierre de la Guiche, whose life extended from 1464 to 1544; and one writer assigns the date 1505 to the building. This refers probably to its completion, for the period of erection of so important a work doubtless extended over a number of years. This is rendered the more probable by a certain change in character



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THE GRAND STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the efficiency of the artillery which he commanded, and which got off four rounds before the enemy's guns came into action. These services were rewarded by the Governorship of Lyons, where he died. Over the entrance to the great stables built by one of his successors he rides in effigy among his cannon and cannon balls.

Philibert's nephew and heir, Jean François de la Guiche, Count of La Pallice and St. Gêran, also followed the military profession, distinguishing himself in Louis XIII's campaigns against the Protestants of the South, especially at the sieges of Montauban and Montpellier, and receiving the bâton of a Marshal of France as his reward. At his death Chaumont passed to his daughter Henriette, who in 1629 married Louis Emmanuel, Duke of Angoulême, son of a bastard of Charles IX. She devoted her long widowhood to the improvement of her estates, to promoting the

in the different elevations as one passes from the south to the north front. The great round tower at the south-west angle, which by its name "Tour d'Amboise" commemorates the Abbot of Cluny, and the whole southern front, with the exception of the dormers, look as if they dated from an age when defence was still a prime consideration. The plain and massive character of the tower and the presence of machicolations and a *chemin de ronde* point to this view, while the large windows appear to be later insertions. The square south-eastern tower, on the other hand, seems to indicate by the type of its windows the transition from the *château fort* to the *maison de plaisance*. In the north front, flanked by a square pavilion on the right and an octagonal stair tower on the left, this character is clearly expressed. The machicolations are absent, the windows are large and ornate, a pierced balustrade replaces the battlements, the stone dormers flame upwards in a flourish of pinnacles, tracery and foliated finials characteristic of the purely residential mansions of the second half of the fifteenth century, such as the earlier house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges and the contemporary Hôtel de Cluny, built as a town residence for himself and his successors by no other than that same Jacques d'Amboise who is held to have directed the buildings of our château of Chaumont.

It will be remembered that in the other Chaumont on the Loire the bulk of the building erected between 1475 and 1481 by Charles I of Amboise was of the same purely Gothic character, while the Renaissance elements were added by his son Charles II, the Maréchal de Chaumont. At Chaumont-la-Guiche a similar later efflorescence of the new Italian manner is to be seen. It may be detected shyly appearing in the "lucarnes" of the north front, in the panelled faces of the pinnacle shafts, the cornices over the windows, and the indication of a shell in the semicircular tympana. This might conceivably fall within the date of 1505, but much of the internal decoration must belong to the reign of Francis I, *i.e.*, some ten to twenty years later.

Chaumont seems to have suffered that drastic process of "restoration" so dear to the hearts of French owners and architects. This is more particularly the case in the interior, where it has been carried to such lengths that it is impossible to judge from the photographs how far what we now see represents the original work and how far it is merely the product of an archaising imagination. The Grand Saloon, a noble apartment with a panelled ceiling vaguely in the style of Francis I and a stone chimney-piece in that of Louis XII, contains some good tapestries and Louis XIV furniture, while an old picture on the mantel is apparently intended as a representation of the castle. Of the furniture of the Dining-room and its unfinished chimneypiece in the manner of the early sixteenth century the less said the better. One of the most interesting objects in the house is a carved panel dated 1530, very characteristic work of a period when the delicate, flat relief carving of the first half of Francis I's reign was giving place to a bolder treatment. Of the staircase all that

can be said is that it appears to be entirely modern work, possibly reproducing older work, but, if so, of a plan unusual in the Gothic period. It is obviously not the staircase in the octagon tower, which contains one of the spiral type then almost universal and so well illustrated in the other Chaumont.

Extensive stabling accommodation was a necessary adjunct of any large house in an age when the chief, not to say the only, sport of the upper classes was the chase, and when they travelled in ponderous coaches drawn by four, six or even as many as twelve horses. And it was in accordance with the whole architectural conceptions of the time that the outbuildings, as well as the house itself, should receive dignified treatment and be so placed as to group with the main building. In Fouquet's Château of Vaux-le-Vicomte, for instance, or that of the Great Cardinal at Richelieu the stables occupy an entire subsidiary court, flanking the forecourt and balanced by another devoted to kennels, servants' quarters, orangeries, or what not. At Versailles, too, the fan-shaped sites opposite the main entrance were utilised for the housing of the King's horses, and at Chantilly the Duke of Bourbon erected stables on a scale even more heroic still, a classical example of the monumental treatment of this class of building.

All due proportions observed, Chaumont-la-Guiche can boast a similar annexe worthy of the house in the block shown in our second illustration. Built by the Duke of Angoulême in the last years of Louis XIII, it bears his monogram ("V A" for Valois-Angoulême) as well as the saltires of his wife's arms. Its massive proportions, heavy leather scroll work, rustications and *œil-de-bœuf* dormers are all of its period; but it preserves a much earlier tradition in contributing the equestrian statue of a lord of the house over the great doorway as is the case at Louis XII's wing at Blois, the Ducal Palace at Nancy and the entrance built by the Constable de Montmorency at Ecouen destroyed in the eighteenth century. But the Duke of Angoulême displayed unusual modesty in commemorating not himself, but the hero of his wife's family, her great-uncle, Philibert, the Grand Master of Ordnance. The like position is occupied in the Grandes Ecuries at Versailles by a noble group of sculptured horses. The interior, as at Chantilly, is vaulted in stone, and the vaults are carried by fifty-six stone piers.

The façade is a very remarkable piece of work. There is a boldness in the simple setting out of the widely spaced openings and the grouping of the central feature between two truly monumental external stairs backed by chimney-stacks of massive design, which cannot fail to produce an impressive effect. The whole composition is one which with all the *gaucherie* of its execution is the expression of a fine architectural conception, and, taken in conjunction with the château itself, it illustrates not unworthily the evolution of design from the playful charm of the waning Middle Age to the dawn of the Grand Manner, which was brought about in the century and a half that separates the reigns of Louis XI and Louis XIV. W. H. WARD.

LITERATURE

A BOOK OF THE WEEK

THOSE who wish to understand the origin of the war cannot afford to overlook a most interesting little book that has been published under the title *Seven Years in Vienna, 1907-1914: A Record of Intrigue*. (Constable: London.) It is anonymous; but internal evidence shows the author to be thoroughly familiar with what may be called the hinterland of the great intrigue. He opens his story dramatically enough with the meeting at Ischl between Edward VII and Francis Joseph in 1907. The English King had been taking the waters at Marienbad and took the opportunity of going to see the Austrian Emperor. We are told that this visit had a political motive. King Edward tried to show the Austrians that the close alliance with Germany was not for the good of Europe. Not merely that, but it would imperil the existence of Austria-Hungary herself, if they allowed that country to be merged in Germany. The old Emperor, who was one of the most astute men in Europe, probably knew this as well as King Edward did; but he was obstinate. He wanted to live out the remainder of his days in peace and he could not withdraw from Germany without trouble, and though diplomatists and ambassadors took up the

King's task and tried to bring about some sort of reconciliation with Italy, these proceedings were reported to Germany and the Triple Alliance degenerated into a dual alliance with a mere understanding with the third partner. In the secret drama enacted at Vienna during the seven years between King Edward's visit and the outbreak of war it can scarcely be said that the Emperor Francis Joseph was a leading character. The illness that came to him shortly after and from which he was not expected to recover left him less able to take a leading part than he had ever been. His recovery was no doubt due in part to his strenuous wish not to make way too soon to his heir, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, whose assassination was the trigger that fired a long-charged gun. Francis Ferdinand was not popular with any class or anybody. He was egotistic and thoroughly inconsiderate. In his youth he had given offence to the poor people by an act of thoughtless folly. Like all the Habsburgs, he was a great horseman, and one day, meeting the funeral of a peasant, he set his horse at the bier and leapt it over it. The incident provides an excellent key to his tactlessness and want of common-sense, to say nothing more. The "parrot" story which went the round of the cafés in Vienna at the time showed

still greater indiscretion. A parrot that had escaped from his house had learned to say, "That old cat Valerie," that being the name of the Emperor's younger and favourite daughter. Archduchesses it called "Peacocks, sluts"; and it had also been taught to say, "He'll live to be a hundred, Sofie."

Kaiser William is the villain of the tragedy. It was known in Vienna that for years he was making the main business of his life the preparation for a great world war, and he had tools and spies everywhere. Some of them, like Prince Max Fürstenberg, were easy and good-natured, perhaps unconscious that they were being used as pawns in the game. He was immersed in financial transactions and did not give his mind thoroughly to the affairs of the country. Count Tchirsky, the German Ambassador at Vienna, was of a different make. He is described as

the *doyen* of the Diplomatic Corps. Cold-blooded, calculating, deep, he was the very embodiment of the Kaiser's ideal politician. Tchirsky did not know what scruples meant, and his many years' experience of the Court of Vienna enabled him to put his fingers upon every weakness there. He saw only the defects and missed much that was fine in the character of the men with whom he had to deal. They spoke of him as the "Old Spider" of the Metternichgasse, where he had his palace.

King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, vain and cowardly, appealed for help to Austria-Hungary in the Balkan War. Austria, indeed, had promised an attack on Serbia from behind while she was engaged with Bulgaria in front. But when Germany and Italy were notified, they refused to join in the campaign; Italy on the ground she has since taken firmly, that the Alliance was defensive and not offensive; and Germany, recognising that an Austrian expedition to the Balkans meant trouble with Italy, persuaded her to back out of her promise. Bulgaria in the end was completely beaten by Serbia, and Ferdinand fled from Sofia to Vienna. The Emperor did not like his presence, and

the Vienna press was let loose upon Ferdinand. Stories to his discredit were circulated everywhere. While his wife comforted the wounded, said the leading papers, he stayed in the capital because he was afraid to return. He spent his time in frivolity, joking with ballet girls behind the scenes, while his consort was purchasing artificial limbs for the maimed from the money that should have been devoted to her own personal uses. Ferdinand soon discovered that in Vienna, as elsewhere, nothing succeeds like success, and that failures are not wanted, either there or in other foreign countries. He crept back to his summer palace, had the guards doubled, and lived in fear and trembling.

The comic relief is furnished by the unspeakable Prince of Wied, whose selection as King of Albania furnished material for many leading articles a few years ago. He was not welcomed in the country he went to govern. For one thing he did not know the language of his subjects, and gossip-mongers soon began to exaggerate his straits in regard to money. People jested in the cafés about the "pauper king" and Europe's appointment of a "beggar sovereign." Eventually he had to fly, and the Italians, knowing that Germany and Austria would contradict the news, said: "Photographs cannot be contradicted. Let us have plenty." Thus was the Prince made the laughing-stock of Europe and forced to abdicate.

The author gives very candid and unbiassed sketches of the statesmen who were responsible for war. Count Berchtold, who was responsible for the policy that led to the Great War, was not a man to cope with the unscrupulous pro-German politicians round about him. He was an aristocrat, a country gentleman, an ideal landlord, a kindly neighbour, and a valued friend. His greatest interest lay in horse-racing and in his magnificent stud. He attended all the race meetings, but always for racing and never for political purposes. Count Berchtold is described as essentially an honest and straightforward man. Indeed, he did not think himself a suitable State-helmsman in the storm. As a young man he had lived a secluded life far from railway and market town, rejoicing in the pleasures of hunting, shooting and climbing. Boxing, fencing and swordsmanship generally are the accomplishments of his class. What he lacked was strength of character. He could be persuaded against his better judgment, and he fell into the trap laid by those who cunningly suggested that the Emperor could not longer be trusted with secrets of state. The fact was that the Emperor had made up his mind to die in peace. His first experience of royalty had been a war which ended in a loss of territory, and if he had been in his prime instead of in his dotage, there would have been no aggressive alliance between Austria and Germany.

Count Stephan Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, has been described as a "Cromwell" of his own country. He had fought more duels than any other Hungarian aristocrat. His great strength of character was rendered ineffective by

the atmosphere of unreality in which he had lived. He had no grasp of what was really happening in Europe. His great ambition was to make Hungary equal to Austria and place Budapest on equal footing with Vienna. Kaiser William, who, as may be imagined, took care to be well informed about the Austrian situation, took pains to attach Tisza to his person, frequently invited him to Berlin and had conferences with him; while Count Berchtold was seldom consulted. He probably deserved the eulogy conveyed in the following passage:

Count Tisza was a gambler accustomed to play with gentlemen; when he played at statesmanship with the German Emperor he did not count upon his adversary using loaded dice.

The very uprightness of his character prevented his suspecting others. The man in the street suspected Kaiser Wilhelm; the Premier did not.

Archduke Carl Francis Joseph, of whom we had a note in last week's paper, has the features of the House to which he belongs. "He might be the Emperor's grandson," was a common remark when the two passed together. We are told that

he learned English at the same time as he learned German from an English governess, who succeeded in implanting a love for her native land in the heart of the young Archduke.

He married the Princess Zita of Parma, who

had been convent-bred, and, like her husband, she was educated partly on English lines. She had spent some years at the convent at the Isle of Wight, where several of her near relatives occupy important positions among the Sisters. She lives part of the year in Italy, and is essentially Italian in type and character.

Until the murder of Sarajevo occurred, the Archduke Carl had not thought of succeeding to the throne, but the event disclosed a strength of character that had been previously concealed beneath the manners of a young courtier.

This was seen at the funeral of the victims of Sarajevo. He insisted upon walking behind the funeral coach that bore his uncle and aunt to their last rest. The Master of the Ceremonies at the Vienna Court had arranged that no member of the House of Habsburg should demean himself by paying this respect to the dead, and he represented this to the Archduke on the steps of the railway station. The Archduke became quite red in the face with excitement as he pointed out to the amazed official that he was now heir to the throne, and that he would decide upon what was the correct thing at Court. All Vienna saw and applauded. He walked alone behind the coffins as first mourner with the air of sadness and solemnity which the occasion demanded. At the same time he freed himself from the domination of the much-dreaded Master of the Ceremonies once and for all.

Perhaps the most interesting fact about him, now that he has ascended the Imperial throne, is that he and his wife are naturally pro-Italian. In the words of our author:

The happiest days of his life had been spent on Italian ground at Viareggio, where he was able to live on the water far away from the Court and its exigencies. He was inclined to trust the Italians, and, unlike his uncle, disliked the Slavs. He was, too, decidedly pro-British before the war. When he was selected to go to England to represent the Emperor, he made his preparations with the greatest alacrity, pleased to think that he had been chosen for the mission.

It will be seen from these notes that the last act of the tragic drama promises to be more interesting even than its beginning. At any rate, the Emperor of Germany has in the Emperor of Austria to deal with a very different personage from the Emperor Francis Joseph.

The Flying Machine from an Engineering Standpoint, by F. W. Lanchester. (Constable, 4s. 6d.)

THIS is not a book for the unscientific amateur or the elementary student of aeronautics. Its author describes it as an endeavour to deal with those problems in mechanical flight which come more directly within the purview of the aeronautical constructor. It does not profess to treat of matters of essentially scientific interest in respect of which the results of existing investigations have been assumed as established facts. This does not mean, however, that its treatment of its subject is other than scientific. Even when Mr. Lanchester sets out to write for the general public he finds it difficult, if not impossible, to avoid assuming mathematical knowledge which is not exactly common property. When he allows himself free play he is always interesting, but at times very difficult to follow owing to the activity of his eminently mathematical brain and a tendency to skip explanations which the average reader would welcome and to assume a complete understanding and recollection of formulæ which are not quite every-day objects to people who have to devote the bulk of their time to the management and control of manufacturing concerns. In this book, as in his other writings, Mr. Lanchester is stimulating of thought and consequently of progress, largely because he never shirks controversial subjects and always takes up a firm line and forms a definite view even in respect of matters with regard to which his view is that of the minority. The book under consideration will therefore be found very useful to those whose mathematical equipment is thoroughly sound, while others who feel themselves on less sure ground will be able to gather from it much information and many suggestions without necessarily following out the whole of the author's reasoning.

THE AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY AT ROTHAMSTED

SOME OF ITS LITERARY TREASURES.

BY DR. E. J. RUSSELL.

IN view of the fact that agriculture is the oldest of the arts it is not surprising that it has developed an extensive literature of its own. Wherever civilisation has spread agricultural writers have arisen who endeavoured

parte subfideus restagnat fulcis deriunda est. Quippe aquarum abundā
ia atq; penuria graminibus aequē est exitio.

Quēadmodum facta prata colantur. Caput. xviii.

Vitus autem pratorum magis curae q̄ laboris est. Primum ne stirpes aut spinas ualidioresq; incrementi herbas ielle patiamur. Atq; alias ante hyemem alias per autumnum extirpemus: ut rubos uirgulas iuncos: alias uellamus ut intuba ac foliitiales spinas. Ac neque suem uel limas impalci cum rostro suffodiāt. & cespites excites. Neque pecora maiora: nisi cum sicillimum solum est: quoniam demergunt ungulas & auerunt: scinduntque radices herbarum. Tum deinde maciora & pendula loca mense februario luna crescente fimo iusanda sunt. Omnesq; lapides & siqua obiacent falciibus obnoxia colligi debent: nec longius exportari: tummitique pro natura locorum aut temperis aut seruis. Sunt etiā quaedam prata sine uestitatis obducta: quibus mederi solent agricolae ueteri uel crasso mulco feminibusque de tabulato superiectis: uel ingesto stercore quorum neutrum tantum prodest: quantum si cinerem sapienter ligeras ea res miscum enecat. At tamen pigiora sunt ista remedia: cum sit efficacissimū de integro locum exarare. Sed haec si prata coepimus facere debemus. Sin autem noua fuerint institienda uel antiqua renouanda (nam multa sunt ut dixi) quae negligentia exoleant & fiant sterilia: ea expedit interdum etiam frumenti causa exarare. quia talis ager post longam delidiam Latas segetes affert. Igitur cum Locum quem pratum destinauerimus: aestate proficuum subactumque sepius per autumnum rapis uel napo uel etiam faba conferemus: in sequente deinde anno frumento. Tertio diligenter arabis: omnesque ualidiores herbas & rubos & arbores: & quae interueniunt radices extirpabimus: nisi si fructus arbuti id facere nos prohibuerit. Deinde uitam permixtam feminibus foci seremus: tum glebas farculis resoluemus: & induta crata coarctabimus. grumosque quos ad uersuram plerumque tractae faciunt crates: dispiciemus: ita & necubi ferramentum plenifecis possit offendere. Sed etiam uitam non conuenit ante defecare: & q̄ permaturuerit & aliqua femina subiacenti solo iecerit. Tum focifecum melleorem oportet inducere: & ac deinde religare: & rigari deinde si fuerit facultas aquae. Si tamen terra densior est: nam in resoluta humo non expedit inducere maiorem uim riuorum priusq; conspissatum & herbis colligatum sit solum: in quom impetus aquarum proluat terram: nudatque radicibus gramina non patitur coalescere: propter quod nec pecora quidem oportet teneris adhuc & subfidentibus pratis immittere: sed quotiens herba profuerit falciibus defecare. Nam pecudes: ut ante iam dixi molli solo insignunt ungulas: atque interruptas non sinit herbarum radices serpere & condensare. Altero tamen anno minora pecora

FIG. 1.—Page from Columella, in which he describes the making of a permanent pasture and the best method of renovating an old one. The seed was to be got by cutting up some meadow hay and threshing it out. Reggia edition, 1482. Presented to the Rothamsted Library by Mr. T. H. Riches.

LIBRO

comperare. Et dellopera della vil
la & ragione adomandare. Capi
tulo decimo tertio.



Vádo il padre della fam
iglia hara in pèsser di
còperare potere debe
secòdo che scriue Cato
ne hauere nell'animo suo di nò cò
perare p cupidigia: & di nò rispia
rare se medesimo: ma vi fidee as
faticare volentieri & nò gli dee bas
tare andanū solamente vna fiata
dato: peroche quanto piu uan
dra dato: tanto piu quello che
sia buono li dee esser apiacimèto.
Ancora debe vedere in ch modo
gli vicini darono stio adagio: &
ache modo vi sipossa vscire entra
& andarli dintorno: & in ch modo
ne puossa vscire. Et dee puer la
qualita della: se gli bene o pe
te ha

FIG. 2.—Petrus Crescentius, Venice edition, 1519. One of the earliest editions of this book, which for long was the most popular treatise on agriculture.

Rothamsted Experimental Station Library is probably the most complete agricultural library in the country, it may be of interest to describe some of these old volumes, especially those not generally found in other libraries of the kind.

The Romans had an extensive agricultural literature, and Varro in B.C. 90 quotes a formidable list of agricultural writers. Most of their works got lost, but a few of outstanding value survived and were handed down and laboriously written out for some fourteen hundred years till the discovery of printing fixed them, and made it improbable that they would ever be lost again. One of the first things the early printers did was to collect and print the Latin authors on agriculture. The

De omnibus agriculturæ partibus,
& de Plantarum animaliumq; natu
ra & utilitate lib. xii. non minus Phi

losofice & medicis, quam economis, agricolationis, passionumq; studio
sis uiles. Per longo rerum ulu exercitium opimum agricolam & Philoso
phum PETRUM CRESCENTIENSEM principem Reipub. Bo
noniensis, proba fide & doctrina conscripti ad Catalogum
Sicilie regem, ante An. cxxx. Ad auctoris tempo
re scripta exemplaria denuo collati
& emendati.

Co. L. 1519, deo la redare, in terram quidam per domos et ecclesias & c. & c. & c.
p. 1519, deo la redare, in terram quidam per domos et ecclesias & c. & c. & c.
p. 1519, deo la redare, in terram quidam per domos et ecclesias & c. & c. & c.



B A S I L E E
PER HENRICVM
PETRUM
1548

Le Livre de agriculture
de Petrus Crescentius

FIG. 3.—Petrus Crescentius. The very fine Basle edition of 1548. Given by Lady Wernher to the Rothamsted Library.



FIG. 4.—The binding of the same. Given by Lady Wernher.

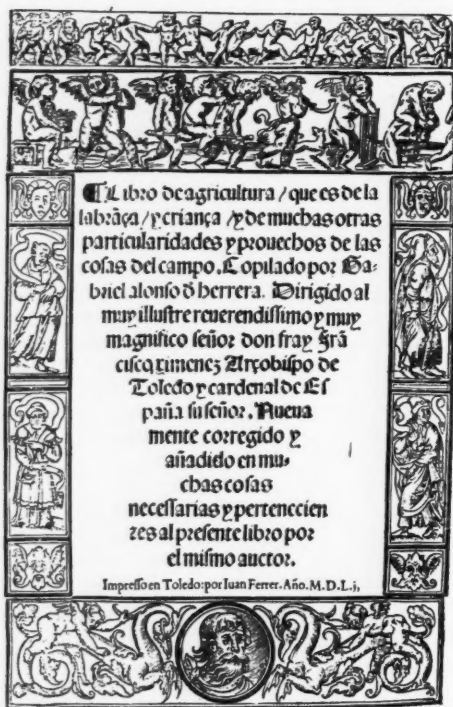


FIG. 5.—Alonso d'Herrera Libro de Agricultura; the famous Spanish book on agriculture in the sixteenth century. This fine copy was presented to the Rothamsted Library by Mr. Victor Hodgson.

arrangement and in its execution. There are no page numbers and no capitals—all these were to have been put in by hand—but, on the other hand, the type is beautiful, the margins are spacious, and the paper is worthy of both. The whole volume is a delight to handle, and is an astonishing tribute to the craftsmen of the day.

But mediæval agriculturists had not been wholly dependent on Roman writers. A Senator of Bologna, Petrus Crescentius, in 1240 wrote a large volume on agriculture arranged in twelve books. In the main it is a compendium of the Latin writers, but it contains also long extracts from Pliny's Natural History, so that it is not only a treatise on practical agriculture, but on agricultural botany and agricultural zoology as well. This book was extremely popular, and some beautiful manuscript copies were made prior to the days of printing, one of which recently came into the hands of Messrs. Quaritch; unfortunately we failed to secure it. We have, however, been able to obtain some of the interesting editions that appeared as soon as printing began. So popular was the book that



FIG. 6.—Fitzherbert's Boke of Husbandry. Probably of earlier date than the well-known 1534 edition. Presented by Mr. J. Martin White.



FIG. 7.—Xenophon's Treatise of Household, 1537. The border was also used for the 1534 edition of Fitzherbert. Presented by Lady Wernher.

Rothamsted Library possesses a beautiful copy of the second of these enterprises, given us by Mr. T. H. Riches, a fine folio edition of Columella, Varro, Palladius and Cato, printed at Reggia in Italy in 1482, only sixteen years after printing had been introduced into that country. The book is very much like a manuscript, both in its

it was printed from no less than ten presses during the period 1471-1564; of these editions the Rothamsted Library possesses five. The 1519 Venice edition has beautiful woodcuts of agricultural operations, one of which is here depicted (Fig. 2). The Basle edition of 1571 is particularly fine, and our copy has the pathetic interest that it belonged to Sigismund, King of Poland, and was beautifully bound for his library. This edition is very rare, and as soon as it appeared in London we were fortunately able to secure it through the prompt and kind assistance of Lady Wernher (Figs. 3 and 4).

The birth of printing came soon after the Renaissance, that wonderful awakening of life and thought that arose in Italy and rapidly dominated art, literature and science, and finally spread to agriculture. There was a larger agricultural literature in Italy during the period 1482 to 1600 than in any other country. We have been able to secure many of these volumes through the efficient help of Messrs. Davis and Orioli, and a most interesting collection they form. From Italy the Renaissance spread and always in its wake there followed the

of a Hoppe garden

If you laye softe graine Rotheres abroad in the delwe and the Sunne, within two or three dayes, they will be lythe, tough, and handsome for this purpose of tyeing, which may not be for-



flowed, for it is most certaine that the Hoppe that lyeth long upon the ground before he be tyeed to the Poale, prospereth nothing so well as it which sooner attayneth thereunto.

Of hylling and hylles.

Nowe you must begin to make your hyls, and for the better doing therof, you must prepare a toole of Iron fashioned some-what lyke to a Copers Adde, but not so much bowing, neyther so narrowe at the heade, and therfore likeli to the nether part of a Chouell, the powle whereof must be made with a rounde hole to receiue a helue, lyke to the helue of a Spattock, and

FIG. 8.—A page of Scott's Parfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden, 1576. Many of the practices described here still survive.

A Booke of the Arte and maner how to plant and Graffe all sortes of trees, how to set stones, and some Pepins, to make wyld trees to graffe on, as also remedies and medicines. VVith diuers other newe practices, by one of the Abbep of Saint Vincent in France, practised with his owne handes, divided into seauen Chapters, as hercafter more playnely shall apppeare. With an addition in the ende of this booke, of certayne Dutch practices. Set forth and Englished, by Leonard Mascall.



In laudem incisionis distinctionis, Hesperidum Campi quicquid Romanaeque telus, Frustrat nobis, incisione datur.

Imprinted at London, for Iohn VVight, 1575.

FIG. 9.—The first English book on Fruit Culture. Presented to the Rothamsted Library by Mr. T. H. Riches.

agricultural writer. In Spain Gabriel Alonso d'Herrera produced his "Libro de Agricultura." This book is on the same plan as that of Crescentius, and it has the great merit of giving references to the original sources from which its information has been drawn. Our oldest edition is that of 1551, Toledo, a magnificent volume presented by Mr. Victor

Hodgson. The lettering of the title page is in red and black, the folios are numbered in Roman figures, and the type is large and very bold (Fig. 5). We have also a somewhat later Medina edition of 1569 with small woodcuts of agriculture modelled on, and apparently copied from, the medallion illustrations of mediæval manuscripts. So far as we know, ours are the only copies of these editions in this country.

Two French writers appeared later and produced books founded on the classical model: Estienne, a connection of the famous scholar, who wrote in conjunction with Liebault, his

son-in-law; and Roland de Serre. In Germany the best known writer was Heresbach. We have received copies of all of their books. These may be said to be the leading writers of the classical school. Their work was the direct outcome of the Renaissance movement, and it was possible only because of the knowledge of the classical writers thus spread abroad.

British agricultural literature developed in a different manner. Our first writers struck out a line of their own, and followed no model at all; theirs was completely different from the classical style. The earliest was Walter de Henley who

flourished about the time of Crescentius (c. 1240). But there was an enormous difference in popularity. Crescentius, as we have seen, was immensely popular, his book being lovingly copied in the old days of written manuscripts, and zealously printed when presses were invented. Walter de Henley, on the other hand, remained unknown; he was not printed until 1890, when the Historical Society unearthed him.

The first English author to be printed was Fitzherbert in 1519; the book was popular and went through several editions. The best known is the edition of 1534, of which some six or more copies are in existence. Ours came from the Carstairs Collection: the title page has been damaged, and the last page is missing, otherwise the volume is complete. By a piece of ill luck we just missed a perfect copy in exquisite condition. It came into the London market, and we were fortunate enough to interest Lady Wernher in the matter, but we were just too late. Before long, however, fortune smiled again on us and we had the offer of another edition which we were able to secure through the generous help of Mr. J. Martin White. This edition is extremely interesting because it is almost certainly the original from which the 1534 edition was set up (Fig. 6). We know of no other copy, and provisionally we put the date at 1532. The same publisher brought out Gentian Hervets' translation of Xenophon's "Boke of Household" "at the desyre of Mayster Geffrey Pole, which boke

for the welthe of this realme I deme very profitable to be red," using the same title page (except for the actual words of the title) as in the 1534 Fitzherbert, but on the last page stating that the book was really printed in 1537. The title page, in short, was a woodcut used for both books once it was made. This Xenophon is the only classical book dealing with agriculture that was translated into English; for this also we are indebted to Lady Wernher (Fig. 7).

The reign of Elizabeth produced a great number of agricultural

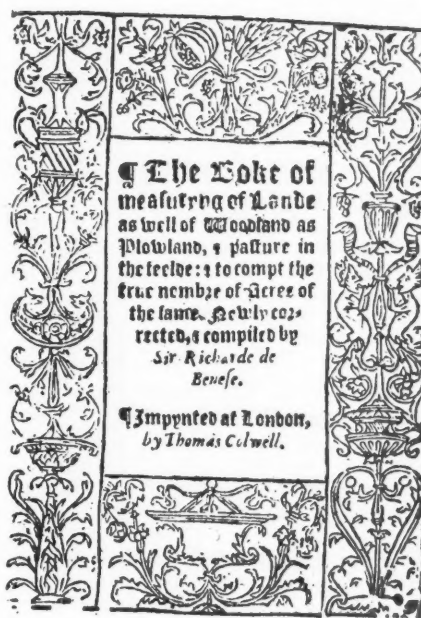


FIG. 12.—The second English book on surveying. This is the 1562 edition.



Imprinted at London for Iohn Wight, dwelling in Paules Church-yard, at the great North doore of Paules.

Anno Domini.
1586.

FIG. 10.—Wight's printer's mark. From Barnaby Googe's translation of Heresbach's Books of Husbandry.

son-in-law; and Roland de Serre. In Germany the best known writer was Heresbach. We have

A DISCOVRSE Of Housebandrie.

No lesse profitable then delictable: declaring how by the Housebandrie, or rather Housewiferie of Hennes, for five hundred Frankes or Frenche poundes (making Englyshe money to. vi. l. s. i. d.) once employed, one maie gaine in the yere fower thousand and five hundred Frankes (whiche in Englyshe money, maketh five hundred poundes) of honest profite: all costes and charges deducted.

Written in the Frenche tongue by Spacieux Prudens Choiselet. And lately translated into Englyshe by R. E.



Imprinted at London by Iohn Kyngston, for Myles Fennynge dwelling in S. Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Bible.

1580.

FIG. 11.—The first English book on poultry.



GOD SPEEDE THE PLOWGH.

Genes. 26.12.

Serens Fitzchak in terra illa adeptus est in eodem anno centuplas mensuras.



LONDON

Printed by Iohn Harison, dwelling in Pater noster row, at the signe of the Gray-hound, and are there to be solde.

1601.

FIG. 13.—A rare Elizabethan tract on agricultural politics.

books, but they all had this in common, that they were specialised books, dealing with one branch only of the subject. We have a number of these, Fig. 8 is from Scott's "Parfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden," 1576, of which we have a beautiful copy. Fig. 9 is the title page of Mascall's "Booke of the Arte and maner how to Plant and Graffe all sortes of trees," 1575, printed by John Wight, "dwelling in Paules Churchyarde, at the great North doore of Paules." What an age when even publishers could turn such phrases and use such stately diction for their business addresses! Ours is a perfect copy, fresh and spotless as if it had only just left "the great North doore of Paules," and, indeed, it can hardly have done much more; for it was found in a bundle of Elizabethan tracts which had probably lain unopened since those far off spacious days. Before it came on the open market we were able to secure it through the generosity of our friend, Mr. T. H. Riches. We also possess Mascall's book on cattle, but not his third book on poultry. We have, however, an earlier book on poultry—the first published in this country, which shows, like a multitude of successors, how "for 500 Frankes or Frenches poundes once employed, one maie gaine in the yere fower thousande and five hundredth Frankes of honest profite, all costes and charges deducted." (Fig. 11). Our copy came from Harrison Weir's library. There are also books on surveying: the very first, by Fitzherbert, we have not got, but we possess the second by Benese: it is a superb little book, 3½ in. by 5½ in., beautifully printed in 1562 (Fig. 12). Then, too, there were books on agricultural politics, on enclosures, bread for the poor, etc., showing a solicitude and thoughtfulness for the labourer that no doubt go far to explain why we never had serious revolutions here. Fig. 13 is typical of these; it is exceedingly rare.

All these books are native products. The Elizabethan agricultural writer was no copyist, and he seems to have been largely uninfluenced by the classical model. It is remarkable that among the many agricultural books published there is not one translation of the great classical writers on agriculture; nothing after Xenophon. But it was not long before the classical model appeared. In 1586 Barnaby Googe translated Heresbach's "Books of Husbandry,"

another of John Wight's beautiful books which we are fortunate enough to possess (Fig. 10). It is a free paraphrase of Columella and Varro. And, again, the classical model came in when Gervase Markham in 1610 translated Estienne and Liebault's "Country Farm." It then came to stay. Markham probably wrote more books on agriculture, and was more popular, than any other writer before or since. His very energy was like to have been his undoing, for he wrote so much that finally his publishers made him sign an agreement to write no more. He borrowed freely from the classical model and from the native products, skimmed out much of the best and embodied it in his numerous writings. Thus he represents the fusion of the two sources. Subsequent writers borrowed largely from him; indeed, some of the borrowings have gone on from generation to generation right up to our own day.

With Markham we must stop. Later writers have an interest of their own, but their books are better known, and probably most agricultural students have seen some of them.

It might be asked, What is the use of all this? What has an Experimental Station, supposed to represent the latest idea in science, to do with mediæval and Elizabethan books? The answer is twofold. Agricultural practices go back to very old times; new methods are only modifications of older ones; and some of the old always survive even after the need for them has disappeared. No practice can be fully understood unless one knows its origin and its history, and unless one understands a practice one cannot very well criticise it.

But there is a further reason. Agriculture is not a trade, it is a great human activity full of absorbing human interest, and only successfully taught by those who feel its human side. The teacher or the expert who begins with a profound knowledge of his subject, but with no feeling for its human side, is hardly likely to secure the sympathy of the farmer. But if he knows something of its history and its lore, of the men who tried to do the work before, and of their failures and successes, then his chance of success becomes much greater. He sees the noble side of the subject, and realises that it is not merely a way of making money, but of getting all the best out of life. When he does that he becomes an enthusiast, and to make an enthusiast is emphatically a great achievement.

CORRESPONDENCE

RECLAIMING A NORFOLK HEATH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have followed with great interest your accounts in the different stages of the reclamation at Methwold, and I think the country owes Dr. Edwards a very deep debt of gratitude for what he has done here. It seems to me strange that the Government has not availed itself to a greater extent than it has of Dr. Edwards' wide knowledge of the best methods of land reclamation. Surely his services would have been invaluable to the Board of Agriculture; we should have had work done instead of talked about. Mr. Hall, as a Development Commissioner, tells us that one of the great difficulties in regard to reclamation is that of finding land, for as soon as it is known that the Government are after it the price automatically goes up. There are thousands of acres or more of reclaimable land around Methwold, and in these days if the landowner declines to go forward with the reclamation there would not be the least difficulty in the Government taking over the land at its agricultural value; and in considering the value I would not take the game rental into account. England at the present moment cannot afford to give up entirely to sport land capable of bearing such crops as you describe. One very valuable point in your articles is the full account of costs which Dr. Edwards has helped you to give. I understand the whole of the costs are audited by the Land Development Commission and, of course, this is ample. I have not myself the slightest doubt as to the accuracy of the figures, but, as you know, the Greatest of All did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, and it is the most difficult thing in the world to make the traditional old-fashioned English farmer and landowner realise that those arid spaces in Norfolk and Suffolk can be made to bear 44 bushels of good wheat to the acre at a profit. If Dr. Edwards would not mind strengthening your articles with an accountant's certificate as to the correctness of the figures, it would greatly help your case in dealing with the reluctant landowner and farmer and would be of infinite value in speeding up reclamation. I write as a private individual, but I would willingly pay any expenses that might be incurred in obtaining the certificate.—HAROLD SMYTHE.

CO-OPERATIVE PIG REARING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Following my letter on this subject in your issue of the 13th inst., Sir Graham Bower, K.C.M.G., of Studwell Lodge, Droxford, Hampshire, writes: "Pig rearing is a question of feeding for those who have sties ready fitted. The sharps are likely to be scarce and dear under the new system of standard bread, and as every household is practising food economy, there is less kitchen waste. In the case of those who have not got sties, the cost of providing the necessary accommodation and the scarcity of labour and

material are serious items." Thus Sir Graham Bower, with his wide Colonial experience, like Sir Charles Walpole, the chairman of Surrey Quarter Sessions, is led to accept the proposal for co-operative piggeries carried on by municipal bodies and urban and rural district councils.—J. LANDEFAR LUCAS.

PIG KEEPING FOR COTTAGERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As the owner of a large number of rural cottages on the one hand, and a breeder and rearer of pigs on a considerable scale on the other, I would urge that four conditions are essential to the successful revival of pig keeping among cottagers at the present time. First, the cottagers themselves who are to profit by the pig keeping must provide the sties, since there is not sufficient labour left on estates to do more than cope, or endeavour to cope, with the repairs which are absolutely essential if houses and buildings generally are to be kept watertight. Many of our self-constituted advisers seem quite unaware that the war has reduced the efficiency of rural labour—taking quality as well as quantity into consideration—by one half, nor do they recognise the enormous and paralysing rise in the cost of all building materials. As for the erection of pig shelters by cottagers themselves, I cannot speak with experience, but I would point out that while gorse is valuable for roofs, etc., there are many districts in which it does not grow, and therefore cannot be obtained. Further, there must be some hard and fairly watertight flooring for the sty and run, otherwise the pig will often be up to his hocks in mud and unable to thrive, while all the manure will be wasted—a most important point, since it is the manure from one pig which must help to grow food for his successor. The second condition is that the existing sanitary regulations must be drastically altered and that swine fever must be taken more seriously in hand. Most people agree as to the first—though whether they would agree for long is another matter—but comparatively few understand how greatly the pig industry suffers from the ever-present fear of swine fever. At present the Government seems quite unable to suppress the plague, and those who, like myself, have suffered severe financial loss from it are apt to wonder how far some of the officials are fitted for their job. One such declared in the hearing of a veterinary surgeon whom I employ that he had got a good berth and would be sorry to lose it through the extinction of the disease. Thirdly, we must recognise that education, as at present understood and practised, unfits people for the monotonous and unremitting work entailed by the smaller branches of agriculture. Light reading and heavy work go ill together, and modern culture has quite unfitted many of our boys and girls for "the dull, drab existence" of the successful pig keeper. In conclusion, may I protest against the indiscriminating demand for State assistance made by most agricultural revivalists which only constitutes a fresh drain upon the resources of the already overburdened taxpayer.—C. F. RYDER.

FROZEN-OUT SWANS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Much amusement has been caused in Bowness-on-Windermere during the recent hard weather by the lake swans deciding that they could gain an easier living on land. They took to the land, and went, with an ungainly, "tanky" waddle, up the main street each morning to the nearest café, where the kind-hearted proprietor answered their appeal with a little nourishment. It was funny to see the swans apparently trying to read the tariff through the window.—LOUIS HERBERT.

A PRIMITIVE DWELLING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Hidden away in the depths of a Sussex wood, just previous to the war, I came across the primitive erection shown in the photograph, and not far away charcoal was being made by the same method as used for centuries. The hut was the home of the charcoal burner during the summer, and was constructed of sods of turf, bracken and old sacks. It was 9ft. or 10ft. in diameter at the base, and contained a stove, the short chimney of which is just visible on the right in the photograph, a bed, stable lamp, some cooking utensils and a few old newspapers. The earlier stages of charcoal burning require constant attention, and so the man has to live near. When the amount of wood at one spot has been converted into charcoal the man takes his hut down and re-erects it near the place of his new "burning." This kind of hut had been in use by this charcoal burner's family for many generations back, and is interesting as being a survival from very early times.—W. H. HAYLES.



THE CHARCOAL BURNER'S HUT.

across the stream at the bottom of his garden, and by dipping in her paw catch the trout as they passed. Also, an old cat of our own covered herself with distinction by clawing out a good-sized chicken which had fallen into a small tub of skim milk put ready for pigs' food. This was seen from a top window whence no rescue would have been possible, so puss had all the glory.—B. HUGHES.

ANIMALS AND YEW TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Dr. Johnson in his dictionary describes the yew as "a Tree of tough wood, used for Bows and therefore planted in Churchyards." Mr. Bowman in his "Magazine of Natural History" conjectures that the origin of its being planted in churchyards may have been that "being from its perennial verdure, its longevity, and the durability of its wood at once an emblem and specimen of immortality, its branches would be employed by our Pagan ancestors on their first arrival here, as the best substitute for the Cypress to deck the graves of the dead." The remarkable characters and properties of the yew have drawn towards it at all times much attention. Diocorides, Pliny and Theophrastus mention its poisonous properties. Cosas (B. M., Gall. VI, 31) relates that Caturleus, King of the Ekuronis, committed suicide by swallowing the juice of the yew. Plutarch says that its fluid is poisonous, and its shade fatal to all who sleep under it. This is also stated by Pliny. The yew appears to have been employed



IN SEARCH OF HOSPITALITY.

from the earliest times in the manufacture of bows, and was used by the nations of antiquity for this purpose. The bows used by the English previous to the introduction of gunpowder were made of yew, and there are many allusions among English poets to the use of its wood. The battles of Crécy and Poitiers were gained by the English yew bows, and the same weapon was used in the wars of York and Lancaster. In Switzerland the yew tree is called "William's Tree," because the bow of William Tell is said to have been made of that wood. Deer and goats are said to feed on the yew with impunity.—M. E. H.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read the various letters about "Animals and Yew Trees" in your paper. In one field where our Jersey cows were turned out there was a very old yew tree which was not railed off; we never had any illness from them eating it. Whether they ever did touch it or not I do not know. A year or two ago the field was let and some shorthorn cows were turned in. A few mornings after two or three of the cows were found lying dead in the field, and it was discovered it was from eating yew. We also had one of these trees near the house, by the side of which were some white steps. We used to watch the thrushes eat the berries, which they loved and fought each other for. How long they retained them, of course, we cannot say, but the steps were covered with the berries which we watched them vomiting up. We never found any dead birds about, so they certainly were not poisoned by them.—ELEANOR SHIFFNER.

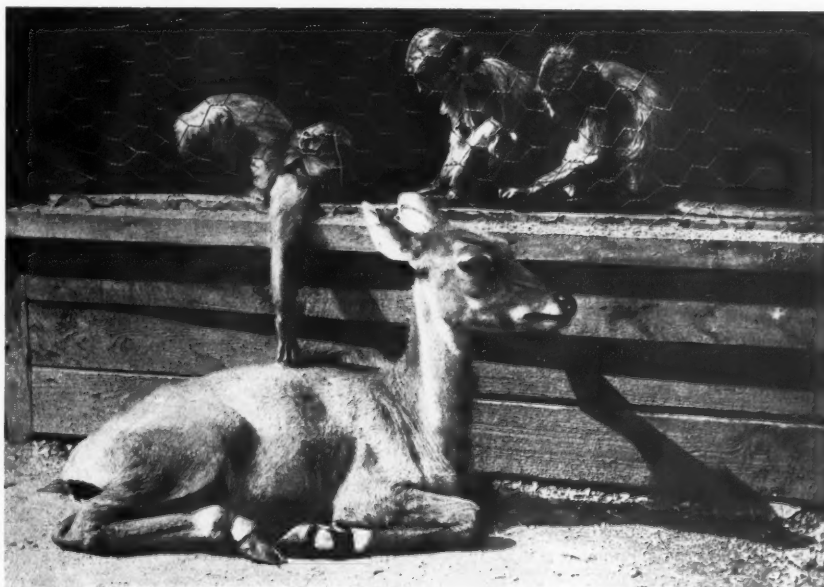
FISHING CATS.

THE EDITOR,
SIR,—A cat that belonged to a friend of mine used to sit on a stepping-stone

MONKEY TRICKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As I was visiting a small zoo the other day I happened to be lucky enough to see the incident shown in the enclosed photograph. I was also very lucky to have my camera at the "ready," for you can guess how long the poor innocent-minded animal continued his sunbath after the monkey got a firm hold. One second after this photograph was taken the monkey pulled, much to the amusement of his mates which were watching.—RUFUS H. MALLINSON.

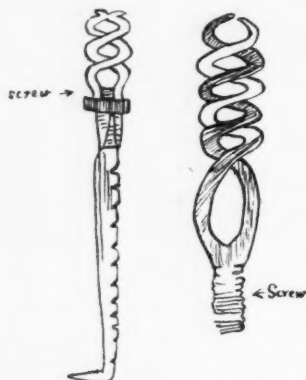


"NOW!"

A BARBAROUS INSTRUMENT: FOX-SCREWS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The attached sketch gives a fair idea of an ugly instrument formerly used in the North Country for drawing a fox which had been marked to earth. Apparently terriers had not then been trained to any high pitch of excellence. Such fox-screws as those illustrated were part of the equipment of the ancient huntsman. When game got to ground he mounted the appliance on his long



FOR DRAWING A FOX.

fell-pole and probed the dark passages of the borran. If Reynard was not beyond reach, or could be induced to attack the top of the instrument, the sharp ends, being constantly twisted, tangled in his loose fur, and soon got so dour a purchase that the creature was easily drawn and despatched. One has heard old followers of the chase describe the taking of foxes, particularly when chased to earth by scratch packs, by the aid of a long willow wand, the tip of which had been split and splayed out so as to make certain a grip on the vulpine hide. "It was a gradely sight, more lively than any fishing" exulted one veteran to whom the death of a lamb-slayer was the only merit of a hunt. Tongs of a different design and intention are used in drawing the badger. In older days (not beyond living memory) the foulmart was urged from its refuge among shattered rock by means of a form of lazy tongs. The type was very primitive, but still not unlike the dog-tongs which are still preserved in old churches along the Welsh marches and elsewhere. By the aid of these a dog whose antics or whines were disturbing the service could be easily removed without damage to limb or dignity of the vigilant churchwarden.—WILLIAM T. PALMER.

FOX-HUNTING IN ONTARIO.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose herewith an extract from a letter received by me from one of my sons in Ontario, Canada, which may interest some of your readers: "I was out a few Sundays ago for a walk with a fellow who has a greyhound; this greyhound has the reputation of having killed two foxes. We visited a place where a fox had killed five or six ducks, and in walking across a rough field within two miles of Port Hope we put up the fox. The greyhound gave him an exciting course and finally caught him up against a cemetery fence, but the fox was an exceptionally large one and fought the dog to a standstill, and when we got there the dog was all in and the fox had left for his den. We tracked him in the snow until we found where he had swum across the river."—ROBERT MANN.

A USE FOR OLD HUNTING COATS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As secretary of the Winscombe Hospital Supply Depot I am writing to ask you whether you would be so very kind as to insert a few lines in your next number asking if any gentlemen would give old hunting coats, of any colour, for making up into ward slippers for the wounded. We make a considerable number of pairs for military hospitals, and the call for them just now is most urgent. Hunting coats make most serviceable shoes; we have already used two pink coats for the upper part of the shoes, with carpet for the soles. We feel sure that the appeal would be responded to, and would enable us to increase our output of slippers, and so the comfort of the wounded.—(Mrs.) J. McMICAL, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Winscombe Hospital Supply Depot.



AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SAG.

EGGS TO LONDON!

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Would this rather amusing extract from an old letter be of interest? It was written to my great-grandmother, as follows:

"Stockton 12 March 1796.

"Dear Madam,—Doubtless by this time you are aware that I am rather an old-fashioned sort of a body, so you will not wonder at my sending Eggs to London. I confess myself obliged for the thought to some person in town, who had sent to Stockton for a quantity. It appeared queer to me, but, however, says I, if one person finds 'em scarce, another must necessarily do the same, so I'll send Mrs. M. (Macarthur) some. . . ."

The above letter *implies* that eggs were scarce in London in the year 1796! —ALCE HUGHES.

A PRIMITIVE BRIDGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed photographs of the way by which many of the Himalayan rivers are crossed may be of interest. In most of the higher valleys, where the bridges are few and far apart, there are usually at fairly frequent intervals what are known as *jhulas*. These consist of a rope stretched across the river, on which runs some sort of carrier, in which either a man can sit or a load be tied and be pulled across to the other side. In many places where there is not sufficient traffic to justify the large expense of a bridge, but where there is really some need of a means of crossing the river, these *jhulas* have been erected at Government expense. They are comparatively cheap and easy to put up, as all that is necessary is a steel rope firmly anchored on either bank, a pulley-block with a seat attached to act as carrier, and a rope with which to haul it across. Crossing the river on one of these *jhulas* is quite safe and fairly comfortable. But off the beaten track one comes across *jhulas* made by the local villagers for their own convenience, and these can hardly be called comfortable nor are they particularly safe. The one illustrated is a typical example of local handiwork. Instead of a steel cable there are seven strands of ordinary grass rope, on which a piece of hollowed out tree takes the place of the pulley-block, and a coil of rope forms the seat.



PREPARING TO CROSS A JHULA.

Not long ago, while touring in the hills, I found that by crossing one of these *jhulas* I could save something like seven miles along a very hot road. I must confess that I did not like the look of it, as it was at least 50 ft. above the river and sagged about 20 ft. in the centre. The men who worked it assured me that it was very strong, but I thought it best to test it first with a heavy load, and as this got over safely, I decided to risk it. The first thing was to get into the coil of rope, by no means as easy as it looked. The coil was made up of nine strands, over three of which you sit straddle legged, while the others come up three under each arm. On each side of the carrier are two handles, on to which you are told to hold firmly—an unnecessary injunction; then as a further precaution, to prevent you losing your head and falling off, you are tied up firmly with rope. Then they let you go, and you whiz down to the bottom of the sag, feeling rather like a human sacrifice. Then follows an awful pause, during which you remain suspended in mid-air over the rushing torrent, while the men on the other side haul in the slack of the drag rope. Then very slowly and jerkily you are pulled in, wondering all the time whether the drag rope is strong enough to bear your weight, and I must admit that I heaved a sigh of relief when my feet were once more on *terra firma*.—H. L. WRIGHT.